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NEVER MORE.

BY H. S. K.

The bloom is on the orchard tree,
The little birds are sweetheartening,
And through the meads, on busy wing,
Doth roam the honey-bee.
Oh! would this hour, so fresh and gay,
From earth might never pass away!
Oh, never more! oh, never more!

And life, too, hath its jocund time,
Its blossom and its roundelay,
Its pleasant toil and holiday,
When gentle hearts make rhyme.
Oh! would that hour, so fresh, so gay,
From life might never pass away!
Oh! never more! oh, never more!

The blossom from the bough has gone,
The bird doth stint his carolling,
The bee doth roam on weary wing,
But manna findeth none.
So sweetest sweet doth pass away,
Nor cometh more youth's holiday—
Oh, never more! oh, never more!

The tree its fruit, the bird its young,
The bee it hath its treasury;
And Hope is ours that cannot die,
—Though Summer's knell be rung!—
With Faith in that long holiday
Which never more shall pass away,
Oh, never more! oh, never more!

A FATAL DOWER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HIS WEDDED WIFE," "LADYBIRD'S PENITENCE," "WE KISSED AGAIN," "ROBIN," "BUNCHIE," ETC.

CHAPTER VIII.—[CONTINUED.]

"DOLLY has a most exquisite 'Bourree' of Bach's," she said lightly. "She will play that for you, Mr. Milner; and then, when you have sung us something, I will give you a cup of my best tea—some Lord de la Poer brought home from China with him."

"Lord de la Poer!" repeated Lloyd, smiling. "Is he your tea-merchant?"

"Oh, dear, no! He is one of the great people of these parts, and"—innocently opening her eyes and glancing at Dolly, who colored hotly as she moved towards the piano—"I suppose a great admirer of mine, since he comes here constantly—at least, he has done so during the last fortnight, I think. When did you come, Dolly?"

Dolly, at the piano, took no heed of the question, and feigned not to hear it, but began to play, while Lord Milner's pleasant face shadowed over a little as he sat down near the Sutherland table over which Mrs. Daunt was presiding.

There was something strangely unreal to the young barrister in the scene before him.

He felt as if he were assisting at a play in which he was much interested, and of which he was very anxious to know the denouement.

Both by nature and from habit he was a very keen observer, and he was too much attached to Stephen Daunt not to be greatly interested in all that concerned him and his happiness.

Besides, even had he not cared for Stephen, he was puzzled by what he saw; he could not understand it; Stephen's apparent indifference, his beautiful wife's haughty coldness, Dolly's evident uneasiness—each and all perplexed him, and put him, as it were, on his mettle to discover the truth.

Watching Sidney more and more closely as the evening went on, he saw that the effort to keep up her appearance of gaiety was telling upon her.

All her color had faded, and dark circles had showed themselves beneath the great sombre dark eyes, while, though she chatted and laughed, her voice was tuneless, and her laugh hard and unmusical.

Lloyd Milner noticed also that any unusual noise, however slight, startled her strangely, that more than once, as she was talking, she paused suddenly and seemed to listen.

Altogether she seemed to be like a woman over whom some strange fear or dread hung which she was trying to forget or to ignore.

And, although he tried to dismiss the thought as absurd and unlikely, it haunted him still as he sat in his own room that night deep in thought, staring into the dying glow of the fire, far into the quiet hours of the night.

His suspicion might have become certainty if he had seen Sidney when she was in the solitude of her own room and had dismissed her maid, who left her mistress sitting before the fire in her pretty satin-laced dressing-gown, her chestnut hair smoothly brushed and plaited for the night.

For some few minutes she sat there quite motionless, a look almost of despair in her dark eyes; then she arose, partly opened her door, and listened intently.

The house was not yet quiet; her husband and his friend had just come out of the smoking-room, and were going up to their apartments.

Sidney heard their cordial "good nights" and the closing of doors, and, softly shutting her own, she crept back to the fire and waited.

Presently all was still and silent.

Sidney opened her door again and listened; but no sound broke the stillness, and she came back to the fire and hurriedly threw off her dressing-robe, donned a short dark walking dress, and, taking from the wardrobe a warm cloak, wrapped it round her, drawing the hood carefully over her head, and went towards the door.

But midway her strength failed her; she stopped, trembling in every limb and gasping for breath in the sudden nervous terror which almost overcame her.

"I cannot do it," she said, despairingly—"I cannot; I have not strength."

She sank helplessly upon a seat, and hid her face for a few minutes, then rose again, and went softly and noiselessly out on to the landing.

All was perfectly quiet. Unless she betrayed herself by some sound loud enough to disturb the household, the chances were a hundred to one against detection.

But Sidney's terror was so great that she could hardly force her trembling limbs to move, and she dragged herself rather than walked down the stairs and across the hall to the drawing-room.

All was dark there; and Sidney groped her way across the room, and sank down tremblingly by the window, powerless in her terror and agitation, her breath coming audibly in gasping sobs.

"I cannot do it," she moaned—"it will kill me."

Then she dragged herself to her feet again, and with fingers that shook so terribly that they were almost powerless, unfastened the window.

The rain had ceased and the stars were shining brightly in the deep blue sky as she closed the window after her and passed out into the quiet night.

* * * * * *

With the cessation of the rain the storm had risen, and the wind was whistling fiercely around the gables and chimneys of Easthorpe.

A sudden gust caught Sidney's cloak as she closed the window, and, snatching the long heavy folds from her trembling hands made her stagger as she stood.

As soon as she recovered herself she moved on down the terrace, and hurriedly crossed the lawn to a little rustic summer-house, which contained a table and two garden-chairs.

Upon one of these Sidney sank, so breathless and exhausted, that the person who was waiting for her there, and who had started forward hastily to greet her, hesitated to speak to her until the gasping, sobbing breath came more evenly.

For some minutes—two or three, perhaps—there was silence in the summer-house—a silence broken only by Sidney's gasping breath and the wail of the wind.

Then a great dark cloud was suddenly rent asunder, and the moon beamed forth, throwing a flood of silver light on the pretty, tastefully-laid-out grounds, and on the two white, anxious faces confronting each other in a silence more eloquent than any words—a silence which Frank Greville was the first to break.

"So you have come!" he said, half reproachfully, half bitterly. "I was beginning to give you up."

"It was difficult to get away," she answered, faintly. "But you might have known that I should come."

"How should I know it?" he replied in a low tone of suppressed passion. "I have not had much reason to depend upon your word," he added, with a little jeering laugh which made the girl shiver.

"Perhaps not," she said, patiently. "Perhaps I deserve all your reproaches; but you did not ask me to meet you here to-night only to listen to your reproaches, Frank."

"No, Heaven knows," he ejaculated, "I did not risk my life for such a poor satisfaction as that."

"Your life?" she questioned.

"Yes, my life. If I am caught it means death, Sidney; but Heaven knows that my life has not been such a precious possession since that wretched night, that I would take much trouble to save it."

"Hush—oh, hush!" she cried, in passionate pain. "Why are you so cruel, Frank? Are you not innocent?"

"Innocent? I, innocent as yourself," he answered earnestly, leaning towards her. "That is what makes it so hard, so bitterly hard, Sidney. Were I guilty, all that I have suffered would not, perhaps, be too great a punishment for such a dastardly crime. But I am innocent—before Heaven I am innocent! And I have suffered tortures enough to have been guilty of a hundred such crimes!"

"Then, why not—why not," she began, tremulously.

"Why not stand my trial?" he concluded, bitterly.

"Yes."

"Because I was a coward; and, when once I had fled, the verdict cut against me made it impossible for me to go back, Sidney."

As they stood together, he put out both hands and took hers, looking down on the beautiful pale face.

"Tell me—and speak the truth—did you ever doubt me? Did you think me guilty of murder?"

"Frank!"

"Ah, be honest! You did believe me so? Then, no wonder that others did, when you—the girl I loved, and my promised wife—could hold such a belief!"

"Frank, listen! It was for a few minutes only—the evidence was so overwhelming, and you were not here. Oh, listen to me?" she cried, piteously. "I never thought that you had done it intentionally—never—not for a moment; but I feared it had been done in hasty anger—by accident, perhaps. Ah, how could one think calmly at such a time? But, when your note came to me, I knew—I knew that you were innocent! Frank, if you had stayed, your innocence would have been proved."

"If I had had one true friend at Ashford, my innocence would have been proved easily enough, in spite of my flight. But I had none—not one friend in the town in which I had spent all my life, where my father lived, where you, Sidney——"

"I!" she cried, bitterly. "What could I do—a girl, helpless, powerless, broken down as I was then? But, Frank"—she put her little hand pleadingly upon his arm—"I am not powerless now. Let me help you now. Let me help you, for our old friendship's sake."

She was weeping now. The hood had fallen from her head, the sweet, pallid face was raised to his in intense compassion and pity.

"Am I to profit by the wealth you have acquired by your treachery to me?" he said bitterly. "How can I trust you, Sidney? If I believed in the truth of any human being, I believed in yours; and yet you were false—false as that other woman who has made me what I am!"

"Frank, where is she?"

He drew back from her in great amazement.

"Do you think I know? Heavens, is it possible that you believed that horrible story—that I had killed the husband to run away with the wife?"

"Hush, for Heaven's sake!" she cried, in an agony of fear, as the harsh, bitter laugh rang out on the stillness of the night. "We shall be overheard!"

"What matters?" he said, bitterly, but speaking in a lower tone now, and glancing out apprehensively into the moonlit grounds. "I am sick of the life I have been leading. To end it would be mercy.

"Sidney, it is only the hope that some day I may be cleared that has prevented me from putting an end to myself. Do you know—can you not conceive what my life has been? No; how can you? Living in luxury and comfort, and able to gratify your every whim, you cannot realize what it is to be hunted from pillar to post, what it is not to know in the morning what may happen before night, not to have a roof over your head nor a meal of dry bread to keep you from starvation——"

A faint, shuddering cry broke from her as she sank down trembling upon one of the rustic seats.

"Oh, Frank, oh, Frank, it has not been so bad as that—it has not been so bad as that!"

"So bad as that?" he questioned. "Sidney, I have been near starvation more than once."

"Oh, Frank!"

The thought was a terrible one. Never had the sadness and misery of Frank's fate been quite absent from her thoughts; she had pictured him hunted, concealed, hiding for life; but she had not fathomed the depths of misery to which he had fallen, and Frank was not unselfish enough to spare her now.

The relief was great to be able to pour out his misery where he knew he should find sympathy and commiseration.

He sat down beside the crouching, shivering girl, and Sidney's great dark eyes looked upward at him in the moonlight, while she wondered if the dark, bronzed, bearded face was indeed the face of the gallant young lover who had wooed and almost won her for his wife.

She herself would not have recognized him in the disguise he had assumed, the dress of a laboring man, the thick, uncared-for beard covering the lower part of his face, his fair hair dull and unkempt, his hands roughened and hardened with work, his eyes, formerly so smiling and gay, now full of gloomy despair.

He looked like a man of middle age, he was so bent and bowed with toil and care; and Sidney's heart seemed ready to break with anguish at sight of the ruined life, wrecked and destroyed for a woman's whim.

"You are sorry for me, Sidney?" he said, sadly.

"Heaven knows that I am!" she answered piteously.

"I wonder," he said musingly, looking down at her with a dreamy look in her blue eyes—"I wonder if you are as sorry for me now, Sidney, as I was for you on the day I saw you made Stephen Daunt's wife?"

Sidney's face changed, and she drew back a little laughingly.

"What do you mean?" she asked.

"I cannot tell you," he answered gravely. "When I saw, by chance, in a newspaper, an announcement of an approaching marriage between you and Stephen Daunt, John Daunt's only son and heir, I risked my life to warn you; but it was too late."

"Then it was you who——"

She faltered, looking up at him with dilated eyes.

"I who climbed up to your window on the eve of the wedding-day?" he said calmly. "Yes, I risked my life in more ways than one that night, Sidney. I saw you sitting there alone, a happy smile in your eyes, as you thought, I suppose, of the happy life before you—ah, such a happy life, poor betrayed child!—and, if you had not fainted, I would have told you what must ever remain untold now. The next morning, when I saw you his wife, I think the bitterness of death was over for me."

"I do not understand," she faltered in a bewildered manner—"I do not understand. That note that I found on my table——"

"Was put there by me," he said. "I knew the Gray House well enough to watch my opportunity and leave it there unseen. The servants who had not gone to the church were busy with the preparations for the wedding-feast."

"What did that note mean?" she asked suddenly, looking at him eagerly and inquiringly. "Did you know then that he did not love me? Was it for that that you pitied me?"

"That he did not love you?" he echoed, after a momentary hesitation. "Is a husband's love necessary when he gives wealth and position and all that makes life easy and pleasant? Heaven help you, Sidney, if they do not make your happiness!"

"You did not ask me to meet you here to talk of my happiness," Sidney said, struggling for calmness. "Tell me of yourself, Frank. Tell me how I can help you—how I can alleviate your trouble or make your life easier."

"My life must always be what it is until my innocence is proved," he said mournfully—"a life of toil and privation and misery.

"Sidney, if I dared request it—if I did not know that, if you granted my request, it could not fail to bring misery upon yourself later, and perhaps make you curse me—I would ask you to use some of your wealth to remove the stain from my name to save me from the misery I endure now."

"No, no," he said, after a moment's hesitation; "do not—you would hate me."

"Why?" she asked gently. "Do you think I am so afraid of my husband's displeasure? He will be angry perhaps if he finds out that I am doing so; but it will not be the first time he has been angry with me on your account."

"Why?"

He looked at her keenly as he spoke.

"Does he—does Stephen Daunt think me guilty? The coward and sneak!" he added, rising in a sudden fury. "To wrong me as he has wronged me and pretend that!"

"Frank," she said gently, "you are speaking of my husband."

"If I were not—— Ah, he knew well what a barrier he was erecting around himself when he married you, Sidney!" he exclaimed passionately.

"Were you not his wife—— But I am frightening you, dear—forgive me! For your sake I will be silent, for your sake I will bear my lot.

"Ah, Sidney, if in the past you had reason to think I did not love you, you have no reason to doubt my love now!"

He spoke with a sadness and solemnity which were more impressive even than his passionate pain had been.

Sidney, looking at him wistfully, pushed her hair back from her forehead.

She was confused and bewildered, tormented with fear, anxiety and pain; her head was throbbing violently, her heart sick with fear and terror.

She moved unsteadily to the door, in her longing for a breath of fresh air; but with a quick frightened movement he drew her back.

"Sidney, are you mad? Do you want to be seen?" he said hoarsely; and she drew back instantly, with a shudder, and for a moment they stood looking at each other in silence, Frank Greville wondering if she had understood the meaning of his last words, Sidney suddenly aroused to the peril of his position and her own.

"Frank," she asked apprehensively, "how did you come? Where are you staying?"

"I am staying at Lymouth," he answered. "Is it possible that I have not told you so already?

"They are making a new line of railway there, and I thought I could get work; but they have no vacancy.

"The fact is," he added restlessly and bitterly, "they think I'm not strong enough, and, unless they are short-handed, they will not employ me."

"How—how do you live?" she asked tremulously.

"As I best can!" he answered, with a reckless laugh. "Sometimes I almost starve."

"Oh, Frank, don't!" she cried piteously. "It cannot be true."

"It is true enough," he replied, in the same reckless manner. "Beggars mustn't be choosers; and I am a beggar, Sidney. All I have eaten to-day is a bit of bread a woman at one of the cottages in the village gave me. Do you know that I almost went round to your kitchen to beg to-night?"

"Oh, Frank, oh, Frank," she sobbed, "do not—do not; I cannot bear it!"

It was a piteous and terrible thing to think of, the man who had been brought up in luxury and refinement reduced to such terrible straits, while his own father and sister were wealthy and considered and respected.

Almost blinded with tears, Sidney felt nervously in her pocket; but it was empty—her purse had been left indoors. Frank, seeing her movement made a hasty gesture of refusal.

"I could not take his money, Sidney," he said hurriedly. "I would starve outright rather than owe anything to your husband."

"You need not—you need not," she declared tremulously. "I have money of my own that I will bring."

"Money given you by him!"

"No, no! Papa gave me some when I was married," she said. "Let me help you Frank. I will bring you some money to-morrow."

He looked down at her with a faint pale smile.

"How?" he asked sadly. "Do you think I dare come here in daylight, you poor child?"

"I will come to you wherever you will," she said earnestly. "Frank, let me help you—I can never know happiness if I do not."

"But you are never alone," he remarked hesitatingly.

"I have loafed about here for four days, hoping to get an opportunity of seeing you, and it was only to-night that I got the chance.

"I have seen you scores of times driving and walking, but you have never been alone; and even to-night I should not have dared to speak to you if I had not seen your face with a look on it which should never have been there if I had been your husband.

"Ah, you poor little child," he added pityingly, "you have found out soon enough that it is not wealth and position which make happiness, that where no love is——"

"Frank," she cried passionately, throwing back her head, and looking at him with sudden indignation, "if my husband did not love me, why did he marry me? I had no wealth to bring him—no position; but little beauty——"

"But little beauty!" he repeated incredulously.

"Do you ever see your own face, Sidney? You are as lovely now as the wretched wife of that murdered man was then."

"And I was lonely and wretched," she went on unheedingly.

"Perhaps he married me because he was sorry. Heaven knows! At any rate I am his wife now, and I bear his name, and I must be true and loyal. And yet—oh, Frank"—she was too miserable to heed what she said, as she turned to him with outstretched pleading hands—"if he did not love me, why did he marry me?"

"He married you because he knew," he began passionately, then stopped abruptly and turned away.

"Because he knew what?" she asked, with feverish earnestness, putting her little hands upon his arm.

"Ah, do not ask me! I cannot tell you—Sidney, I do not know. He married because—he loved you, I suppose. You are beautiful enough to win any man's love."

"That was not why," she declared. "Ah, if he loved me, could he be so cold to me? Frank, he saw your note."

"My note to you?" Frank said suddenly, turning to her again in eager excitement. "What did he say? Tell me, Sidney. Have you forgotten?"

"Forgotten?" she repeated, pushing back the heavy loosened hair from the beautiful pale face which looked ashen white in the moonlight.

"Shall I ever forget? He was so angry—so angry that I look back to our wedding-day with terror even now."

"Was it on your wedding-day?" Frank asked eagerly, and yet remorsefully.

"Yes. I found it just as I was dressing to go away," she answered faintly; "and I slipped it into my dress.

"When we were on the way, it fell out, and I forgot for a moment and said that he might read it."

"And he was angry?"

"Yes, very angry," she said wearily. "He has never cared for me since," she added piteously, the great tears beginning to rain down her white cheeks; "and he forbade me to do anything to help you, Frank."

"Ay," he remarked bitterly, "he has his own reasons for wanting you to think me guilty, and the world also!"

Sidney did not heed the bitter words; she was thinking of the painful scene when Stephen had almost accused her of treachery and had forbidden her, in strongest words, to hold any communication with the man who now stood beside her, looking at her with eyes so full of compassion, of the sorrow for her which filled his heart almost to the exclusion of his own self-pity.

"He said that I had married him only to get the means of helping you," she went on with a childish simplicity, a passionate pain in her broken voice.

"And I did not contradict him; how could I? It was in part true, and I was so tired—so tired—but not so tired as I am now."

The intense weariness and sadness in her voice caused him to look at her pitifully, and a groan broke from him as he hid his face upon his hands.

Hard as his own life was, hers was almost as bitter, poor child; he would have compassion upon her! She loved her husband, and——

The rest of the thought died away as she turned to him and put her hand upon his arm.

"Frank," she said more calmly, "I dare not stay longer. Tell me where I can see you to-morrow."

He uncovered his face slowly.

"Do not trouble," he answered gently; "obey your husband, Sidney. Do not run any more risks for my sake; I will not clear myself at such a cost to you."

"I must help you," she said passionately "at any cost to myself! Tell me some place where we can meet, or I must find out one myself Frank."

"Can you come to Lymouth," he asked hurriedly—"alone? It must be alone Sidney."

"I will drive there to-morrow," she answered firmly. "Will two o'clock do? I think I can manage it then."

"If not to-morrow, the next day," he said. "I shall expect you."

"I will come to-morrow," she answered hurriedly. "How could you wait until the next day?"

"It would not be my first long fast," he replied bitterly. "And physical hunger is not the worst pain I have had to bear, Sidney."

"Oh, Frank, poor fellow!" she said, breaking into sobs.

"If I could only help you! See!" she added hurriedly, taking off one of her rings and holding it out to him; but he put it back with a faint smile.

"My dear child," he said gently, "it would be useless. How could I dispose of such a gem? They would think I had stolen it.

"I can wait until to-morrow, Sidney, and—and—if you find you cannot come," he added unsteadily, "do not grieve or fret; it will be all for the best."

"I will come," she answered steadily. "And now, Frank, good-bye."

She put out her hands to him, and he caught them in his and pressed them to his lips and to his heart, and the next minute he was alone in the rustic summer-house, and Sidney was gone.

"Would she care—would she care?" he muttered brokenly, as he made his way carefully though the pretty tastefully-laid-out grounds. "If he were in my place, would she care? And, if we all got our deserts, he would be the hunted outlawed culprit, not I!"

CHAPTER IX.

THE morning of the next day was gray and mild, and rather misty.

Sidney Daunt, coming down to breakfast in a soft cashmere robe of a rich ruby color, paused a moment at one of the windows of the gallery which ran round the second floor of Easthorpe, and stood looking out at the grounds which surrounded the pretty house.

Autumn as the season was, they still retained much of their beauty.

The foliage was still luxuriant; but its color had changed.

Green was the exception, not the rule now; the leaves were red and yellow and brown.

The Virginia creeper was showing its flaming hue, flashing out brilliantly on the dull gray morning, and the dahlias were in full bloom in the flower-garden before the drawing-room windows.

With wistful eyes Sidney stood contemplating the scene; it looked so calm and peaceful, and so fair, notwithstanding the gray leaden sky overhead and the lack of sunshine.

Nothing could have been more out of harmony with the girl's feverish unrest and anxiety than the still gray calm which hung brooding over all things.

All the night she had lain wide-eyed and sleepless on her pillows, feverishly longing for, yet dreading the coming of day her thoughts followed Frank Greville on his lonely way, as he toiled along the deserted country roads, or recalling the misery she endured while listening to his account of the sufferings of the past two years.

All night long she had been haunted by a terrible fear lest he should be recognized—he had been so well known in the neighborhood—and arrested; and in the stillness and solitude of the long night-hours she had lived over again that scene on her wedding-day which seemed to have erected an insurmountable barrier between herself and Stephen.

Ah, how terribly angry he would be if it ever came to his knowledge that, in spite of the formal prohibition he had given her, she had met Frank Greville and promised to help him!

And yet how could she help it?

Frank had been so much to her in the past.

He was associated with all that was brightest in her young life; he had been such a kind, tender brother, to her; he had even loved her until Sibyl Neil's fatal beauty had crossed his path.

How could she desert him? How could he withhold the assistance he so much needed?

Ah, if only Stephen loved her, if only she could go to him and rest her aching tired head on his shoulder and tell him that Frank was innocent, and ask him to give her old friend the help he—Stephen—was so much better able to give than she was!

But that was impossible; he did not love her; he had married her out of pity, or for her pretty looks perhaps, or because he wanted a wife, and, since the woman he loved—for that he as well as Frank had loved Sibyl Neil, Sidney did not doubt—was not for him, he had married the one nearest to his hand.

He was very good to her, of course—it was not in his nature to be anything but good to any living thing with which he had to do—very generous and very indulgent; but that confidence and mutual faith and love which form the only true basis of wedded happiness did not exist—would never exist between them.

Glancing out at the tranquil, peaceful scene before her, Sidney wondered if the last night's meeting had really taken place?

Had she dreamed it?

Was it possible that she had met Frank there in the pretty quaint summer-house at the other end of the lawn?

It had been moonlight then, and the wind had been blowing furiously round the house.

Had it all been a dream, that stolen meeting, her dread, her anxiety, her hurried return, her noiseless entrance?

Ah, no, no, it was no dream; it had all taken place; the calm and peace and tranquility were all a delusion and a snare!

There could be no calm, no peace, no tranquility for her until Frank was cleared.

What did he mean, she wondered, by saying that Stephen had his own reasons for wishing the world to believe in his guilt?

What did he mean by the assertion that by marrying her Stephen had erected a barrier round——

"Good morning, Mrs. Daunt," said a pleasant voice behind her at this juncture. "Are you thinking that a southerly wind and a cloudy sky are proclaiming a hunting morning?"

Sidney turned quickly, with a little nervous start.

Mr. Milner, smiling and pleasant in his hunting costume, had come along the gallery from his room, his steps inaudible on the thick Turkey carpet.

"Good morning," she said, giving him her hand with a little smile. "I forgot that you were going to hunt to-day. Where is the meet?"

"At Cotley Hall. I thought you would go with us."

"No," she answered, with a little shake of her pretty head, "I shall not hunt this winter. Are we late, I wonder? Stephen does not like to be kept waiting on these occasions, or indeed on any other," she added, with a laugh. "I do not know any one who does."

Stephen Daunt, also attired in hunting "pink" and faultless "tops," was in the dining-room, glancing over the morning papers, and Dolly, in a bewitching costume of seal-brown velvet, was hovering between the window and the table, and glancing impatiently at the clock now and again. At sight of Sidney she uttered a little exclamation of disappointment.

"Oh, Sidney, have you forgotten? We promised Lady Cotley we would drive over for the meet," she said eagerly; and Sidney looked over at her blankly.

"I had quite forgotten, dear," she answered hurriedly—"I really had quite forgotten."

Lloyd Milner was not so completely entranced by the charming little vision in brown velvet, with the pouting expression of disappointment on its fair face, but that he saw the cold conventional greeting which passed between Sidney and her husband—a greeting perfectly courteous, and yet as perfectly indifferent as if they were visitors at the same country-house, but had only a very slight acquaintance.

"It is the perfection of a hunting morning," Stephen said heartily, as Sidney walked to the head of the table, and began to make the tea. "You are favored Milner."

"Yes, I was just saying to Mrs. Daunt that we had the proverbial southerly wind and cloudy sky," Milner returned, smiling. "You don't hunt, Miss Daunt?"

"No, I ride to the meet sometimes," Dolly answered; "but I hoped Sidney would drive me there to-day."

Sidney said nothing; her slim white fingers were moving deftly among the delicate old china and silver, and she seemed not to have heard.

In reality she was wondering how she could surmount the difficulty which had suddenly arisen to hinder her going to Lymouth.

She had utterly forgotten her promise to drive to Cotley; but, if Dolly did not go, she—Sidney—would have no opportunity of going alone to meet Frank.

"How did you sleep, Milner?" Stephen asked, as he threw aside the newspapers and came over to take his place at the table. "Well, I hope?"

"Tolerably well," said his friend, with a laugh. "Easthorpe is too new a residence to possess the distinction of a ghost, I presume?"

"I suppose so," Stephen answered carelessly. "Why do you ask?"

"Because, if it were not, I should say I heard one last night," was the reply. "Mrs. Daunt, may I send you some of this omelet?"

"What do you mean, Mr. Milner?" said Dolly eagerly. "Did you hear any sounds in the house last night?"

"Yes," he replied smilingly, glancing at the pretty eager face, "I heard soft swift

footsteps and the rustling of a woman's gown along——"

A little clatter drowned the remainder of the words.

Sidney had let the sugar-tongs fall from her unsteady fingers, and they had broken one of the fragile old china cups of the costly breakfast-service.

Dolly, an ardent chinamaniac, looked dismayed.

"Oh, Sidney, what a pity! One of those lovely old cups!"

"It was very awkward," Sidney murmured with pale lips, looking far more startled than such a small catastrophe warranted, and uneasily conscious that Lloyd Milner's keen eyes were watching her with a keen scrutiny.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Carving His Fortune.

BY E. LINWOOD SMITH.

NINA VALENTINE, tiny, brunette, and beautiful, peeped through the closed blinds of her room window, overlooking the front garden of a large fashionable house.

There had floated up to her the notes of a clear, baritone voice, sweet and powerful, cheerfully singing—

"Paddle your own canoe."

Singing it, too, with a crisp accent upon the words, that gave each one its full meaning.

Nina's great black eyes danced merrily, as she looked and listened.

For while the song rang out upon the hot summer air, this was what she saw:

A hammock, swung between two giant elm trees, and lying in that, his head well raised by the slope of the softly undulating couch, a man of perhaps twenty-five or six with a tall, strong figure, full-chested, broad-shouldered, and a head covered with close clustering curls of nut brown, a face eminently handsome, with full brown beard, and large eyes of deepest blue.

His dress was all of linen, white as drifted snow, excepting a deep blue necktie, carelessly knotted under the collar.

Slippered feet were lazily crossed, and one shapely hand held a cigar, whose brilliant sparks were fast twinkling out into grey death.

"Chester Weldon," thought Nina; "doesn't he look like a personation of luxurious ease?

"Paddle your own canoe, indeed! If ever a man had his canoe paddled for him all his life, Chester Weldon is the man.

"Father and grandfather paddled busily coining the gold that allows this young Adonis to lie in a hammock and sing. Well," and here a little choking sigh broke in upon Nina's meditations, "I suppose it is all right; but I wonder if his arms are not as strong as mine for rowing the barque of life over the stormy seas of poverty and trouble."

She gave herself a little shake then, and took up her work, a lace cap she was making for Mrs. Harding.

Mrs. Harding was a widow, rich and good-natured, and seeing that the governess of her sister's five unruly children was growing pale and thin in the hot city air, had proposed to give her a breath of hill breezes.

"I shall want some companion," she said "and I will pay Miss Valentine just the same as you do for a few weeks."

It being the family obligation to submit to any whim of the rich aunt's, Nina's employer had given consent, and the little teacher was carried off for a summer holiday.

For Mrs. Harding made it really and truly a holiday, giving Nina a pleasant room next her own, and making her join in all the excursions and pleasures of the young people.

She had learned croquet, this dark-eyed governess, and croquet was a fascinating game when Chester Weldon took a mallet as her partner, or was the most merciful of all her opponents.

She loved to walk in shady lanes, and hear a strong step crunching the dry grass in pursuit, while Chester Weldon's voice would call—

"Don't walk so fast, Miss Nina; give a fellow half a chance to catch you, and a few moments' conversation."

But then, of course, she told herself, this petted, curled darling of fortune, did not look beyond a summer flirtation in his acquaintance with Mrs. Harding's companion the governess of her sister's children.

There was nothing in the least romantic in the life of Nina Valentine.

She was the daughter of an honest mechanic, and having lost both her parents, had been educated for a teacher in a charitable asylum.

She had studied diligently, and come from the institution with a first-rate diploma, and a warm letter of praise from those who had cared for her desolate childhood.

And she was a thoroughly conscientious, faithful little woman in every duty she undertook, winning respect and affection wherever she went.

What she had won more than these, she had not yet learned, as she looked through the green slats of her window-shutters, at Chester Weldon.

While she fed her eyes, and, it must be owned, her heart, in this way, the little lad who brought the letters trotted up the road upon his donkey, and gave Chester Weldon a letter.

Nina, expecting no missive, did not join the group clustering around the messenger but looked up often from the mysteries of Mrs. Harding's lace cap to the long, white figure stretched upon the hammock.

The song ceased presently.

There was a silence, and then a long-drawn whistle expressive of surprise.

In the handsome face there was more than surprise, a look of blank consternation, as Chester Weldon sprang out of the hammock, tossed away his half-smoked cigar, and strode up to the house, his brows drawn in great wrinkles.

Half an hour later, Nina Valentine, starting for a morning walk, nearly stumbled over Chester Weldon in the orchard, lying face down on the grass.

He sprang to his feet and looked at her with a dazed expression as if he had been awakened from sleep.

Seeing who it was, he took Nina's hand in his own for a moment, to draw her gently to a bench under a gnarled old apple tree.

"Miss Nina," he said, abruptly, "did you ever fancy what would be the sensation of falling out of a balloon?"

"Never!" was the wondering reply.

"A sort of knocked-all-in-a-heap experience, it seems to me.

"I have just come down. There, don't open your eyes any wider; you must know that I have been sufficiently idiotic to leave my affairs entirely in the control of the lawyer who was my guardian before I came of age, signing whatever he gave me without question.

"My profession—I studied medicine, but never practiced or called myself a doctor—was simply a finish to education.

"I hated business, and Mr. Goslen knew it, and kindly managed mine. Do you understand?

"Well, this accommodating and estimable gentleman, after indulging in wild speculations with his own money and mine, till he lost both, committed suicide yesterday, leaving me a pauper!"

"Oh, Mr. Weldon! Chester!" said Nina, her eyes full of tears. "I am so sorry."

"Are you? That is good of you, because—I may be a coward to speak of it now—but I love you, Nina.

"Don't speak yet. I am not poltroon enough to want to waken too much sympathy, but I did hope to win you to share my wealth, to accept every happiness my love could give my wife. As it is——"

"As it is," said Nina, "you will let me give you any cheer and hope my love can offer.

"I know I am bold"—and quick blushes colored the beautiful face, all dashing with generous feeling—"but I will not have you think your money would have weighed one feather's weight with me."

"My little love," he said, fondly; "but what can we do Nina?"

"I will tell you."

And then clear and sweet rang out the chorus of the song Chester had sung, swinging lazily in the hammock.

"Paddle my own canoe. Will you wait for me till I bring it safely ashore?" he asked.

And Nina was surprised at the sudden ring of cheer in his voice, the spring into graceful energy in his figure.

He had been to her a personified spirit of easy-going, lazy life.

Suddenly he became a man, full of purpose and energy.

"I will wait," she said, simply, but all the love-light of her heart in her great dark eyes, "and my own little barque shall not float idly on the stream in the meantime."

They talked long and earnestly, and then the gay friends mourned the absence of Chester Weldon, wondering much that he journeyed cityward while summer still held reign over the brick walls and paved streets.

But Nina, who alone knew his secret, kept it faithfully, ever cheerful and busy, the active little sunbeam she had been from childhood.

It was a little hard when she went back to the drudgery of governess, to find no Chester to welcome her home again, only a long, tender letter, telling her he had gone away.

"One of my old college friends is the only doctor in a famously sick city," he wrote, "and he wants a good, hard-working partner, one who will give time, skill, patience and toil for a small compensation, often for none at all.

"He hoped that I might know of some young physician to whom the experience would be valuable.

"I shall considerably astonish his mind by presenting myself as the candidate—but I am going.

"I find nothing here to do, and the small sum I had in the bank is nearly gone. So, darling, I'll steer my canoe for the place, hoping to freight it for both of us."

There was much more, and Nina's heart glowed with pride at the hearty, manly vigor of every line and word.

Was this the man she had half despised, for all her love, when he lay in a hammock half the day, smoking, read poetry under the trees, or knocked croquet balls about?

Were these the sentiments of the daintily-dressed exquisite who had dawdled away the spring of his life as a lady's man, carrying parasols to shade pretty faces, and declaring life a bore when his favorite horse went lame, or his cook failed upon his pet pudding?

The very same.

Only he needed a spur!

Would he tire in the novel race for the money that had ever flowed so easily into his hands?

There was little sign of that in the letters that came often to gladden Nina's life, and make its monotony endurable—letters full of courage, making merry over deprivations, and breathing only of hope and cheer.

"They call this a city," he wrote once, "but to a Londoner born and bred, it is a dismal, unhealthy collection of houses."

And Nina cried over the deprivations of the poor fellow, who had so long found no crumpled rose-leaves in his luxurious life, and then sang over her brave true hero, who was fighting so nobly for his proper place in the world, and for her.

Every letter made his love its leading theme, his faith in Nina's truth and fidelity the moving influence of his life.

"I know you will not give the treasure of your love to any drone, any weak, waiting, disappointed man," Chester wrote, "and so, when I weary of the uncongenial society around me, the dragging routine of daily labor, I whisper 'Nina' to my heart, and take up the burden again hopefully."

Yet with all his cheer, Chester Weldon often sadly realized the fact that his hard work was but poorly paid, and the fortune he hoped to win for Nina's sake still far from his grasp.

His long life of utter ease had given him habits of extravagance that were far harder to conquer than the lazy movements, never quite natural.

He could throw all manly vigor into his work, studying in every leisure hour, fighting the loathsome enemy, disease, at every turn, but it was difficult to keep the hard-earned money for necessaries alone.

Tobacco was the first deprivation, and none but its adorers know how fondly the heart turns to a fragrant Havana.

But cigars were put down firmly, and after those the many costly trifles that are almost a necessity to a man reared as Chester Weldon had been.

Three years in the city, of which Fog Hill was one district, found Dr. Weldon a popular physician, with sometimes a spare pound to put by.

The city was growing, and steadily increasing its importance.

Chester Weldon had earned his position as the best physician in the place by fair, honest study and toil, and when his partner went still further, kept his position, and as his patients grew, found his own means perceptibly increasing.

"Three years," sighed Nina Valentine, looking out of the identical window where she had looked at Chester Weldon swinging in the hammock, rich, dainty, and careless; "three years. Will he come for me soon?"

It was August, and Mrs. Harding was the fairy god-mother who wanted to give Miss Valentine a holiday.

The day was young yet, and Nina was watching for the post.

Far off on the road she saw a tall, strong figure coming along at a rapid gait, erect, manly, and graceful.

A suit of grey tweed, a straw hat, and a light cane, were all common sights enough amongst the pleasure-seekers, but Nina watched breathlessly, till under the straw hat she could see a bronzed, handsome face and curling beard.

Then down the stairs like a flash, into the garden, and both her extended hands were grasped in two strong ones, while a clear voice cried—

"They told me you were here, so I came straight on, instead of writing."

"I am so glad."

"Come to the old apple tree," said Chester, leading the way.

"Now," he said, as they stood in the orchard, "let me look at you.

"Little darling! You have waited for me."

"Yes, and of all places this is the best to meet in.

"But I dared not hope you would come so soon."

"I could not but for a sudden rise in the value of some land I bought for a mere song. I am not a rich man yet, Nina, but I can offer you a pleasant home, and all comfort, if you will brave Fog Hill."

"Anywhere with you," she whispered. "I would have shared all the hardships, only—you—did—not—ask—me. I would not be a burden to you, Chester, but if I can lighten one care, I will gladly brave Fog Hill."

So, when a few weeks of well-earned summer rest were over, the two were quietly married and went to Fog Hill.

But as time passed on, those fortunate investments of the doctor's became more numerous and more prosperous, and his place in society more prominent, till to-day Nina is the wife of a man of importance and wealth, a leader in matters of public interest, respected by all.

And when he talks of his own experiences, Dr. Chester Weldon says gratefully—

"When I see the drones in the world's hive, Nina, those who merely spend a large income in self-indulgence, I thank Heaven for the loss that roused my manhood and energy, and bless the day that I learned to win honor for myself, and carve out my own fortune."

IT was at a church oyster supper, the merriment was at its height, when suddenly an appalling shriek from the pastor's study (the kitchen) rent the air. Confusion worse confounded reigned supreme, when a bevy of erstwhile beauties rushed frantically with dishevelled hair and distorted features into the room. "What is it? what is it?" eagerly demanded the trembling guests. "This is the matter," said one of the girls, who, more bold than the rest, had forked out of the soup a slimy thing, which she bore gallantly aloft. "This awful thing was in the soup." It was an oyster.

Bric-a-Brac.

SINGLE RAIL.—A railroad, in which the cars run astride a single rail, has been so successful that one like it is to be built in France.

LONDON LIFE.—The circumstances were very pathetic. A ruined gentleman continued to maintain the wife of his affections in a life of ease by presenting himself as a one-legged beggar on a crowded city crossing, notwithstanding the conviction that it would one day bring him to grief. He was finally run over by his own wife's brougham. She had never suspected what his business was till she saw the victim of the accident.

LAND PLEDGED.—Christian I. of Denmark pledged the Orkneys and Shetland to James III, of England in 1468, for a sum of sixty thousand florins. By that tenure the British Crown even now retains the principalities. Geographically however, as well as politically, the archipelagoes form a natural component part of Scotland; and the memory of the Scandinavian connection is now nothing more than a picturesque historical tradition.

"MARIA SOUND THE ALARM."—A very enjoyable concert was given in a small Eastern town. Among the performers was a popular tenor singer, who was announced by the programme as prepared to sing, among other selections, an "Aria: 'Sound the Alarm,' by Handel." This he sang with strong effect, and was horrified, the next day, to perceive in the local paper the statement that he had "sung, with great taste and expression, a fine song by Handel, entitled 'Maria, Sound the Alarm.'"

SOME METALS.—Bismuth is chiefly remarkable on account of its extreme fusibility; to exhibit which quality, spoons are sometimes made of it, which, when put into boiling water, or even very hot tea, melt and lose their form. It is used as a flux, and with the addition of tin, lead or copper, it makes solder. Nickel is a hard, white metal, more nearly resembling silver than tin does; it is chiefly brought from Germany to this country, and is much used in the manufacture of German silver. It is not, however, abundant, which remark applies to all these new metals, cobalt excepted.

RICH IN CHEESE.—In Valois, Switzerland, a man's riches are estimated according to the number of cheeses he owns. By a "cheese rich" man is meant one as wealthy as Crœsus. Said one Valois boy to a companion, "My father is a 'cheese rich' man." "How many cheeses has he?" said the other. "Oh, at least so many, for we have just made a lot." "Nonsense," said the other, smiling contemptuously, "my father has that number the year round, and some of ours are a hundred years old." When a child is born, it is the custom to make a cheese, leaving it untouched during its lifetime, cutting it first at its funeral feast.

SINGULAR MONUMENT.—A divine has found an odd monument in northern New York, which has been erected to the memory of a most excellent woman. A good man had lived happily with a devoted wife until they were well on in years, when she died. He bethought him of some fitting memorial to place over her grave; and the happy thought struck him that the square stove by which they had been comfortable through many long winters would be just what she would like to have if she had a voice in the matter. He had the stove taken to the churchyard and placed over the remains of his companion, who sleep quietly underneath it.

LA MANCHOTTE.—A celebrity of a certain sort in Brussels known as La Manchotte, from her having but one hand, was lately found with her dog dead from charcoal fumes in her room, an incident which was the talk of the town for twenty four hours. A romantic story was previously circulated as to the loss of her hand, to the effect that she passionately loved a young officer, who, taking her beautiful hand in his caressed and admired it, saying he wished he had such a hand. "It is yours," she is alleged to have said, "as, indeed, is everything I have," and the next morning the hand was sent to him. A Brussels paper, however, says that in the interest of truth it feels bound to say that La Manchotte lost her hand by poisoning her finger with verdigris while cleaning a copper saucepan when she was a kitchen maid.

BABY SEALS.—During the first half of March, on these great floating fields of ice, are born thousands of baby seals—all in soft woolly dress, white, or white with a beautiful golden lustre. The Newfoundlanders call them "white coats." In a few weeks, however, they lose their soft covering, and a gray, coarse fur takes its place. In this uniform they bear the name of "ragged-jackets," and the full colors of the adult are gained, with the black crescentic or harp-like marks on the back, which give them the name of "harps." The squealing and barking at one of these immense nurseries can be heard for a very long distance. When the babies are very young, the mothers leave them on the ice and go off in search of food, coming back frequently to look after the little ones, and although there are thousands of the small white, squealing creatures, which to you and me would seem to be precisely alike, and all are moving about more or less, the mother never makes a mistake, nor feeds any bleating baby until she has found her own. If ice happens to pack around them, so that they cannot open holes, nor get into the water, the whole army will laboriously travel by floundering leaps to the edge of the field; and they show an astonishing sagacity in discovering the right direction.

WOOD SORREL.

BY E. W.

My dearest love, thy flower's a-bloom
Once more. I've gathered it to-day—
As through the tender forest gloom
I took my lonely way.

Half-hid 'neath sprays of bramble vine,
Two fragile blossoms lit the place,
As once those sad sweet eyes of thine
Lit up a flower-like face.

The self-same charms to thee—to them,
Hath by a word of God been given,
The opal shimmering diadem
Thou wearest now in heaven.

Ah, loved and lost! unequalled maid!
Green are the leaves of fond regret
By thy lone lover sadly laid
In spring's gay carcanet.

Thy spirit surely haunts the path
Where I in retrospective mood
Seek the sole solace memory hath,
The bliss of quietude.

Thy footfall light precedes me still,
As sun or shadow falls on grass,
Some potent grace intangible,
O'er me from thee doth pass.

And bending o'er the faint-veined flower—
Thy floral self—on slender stalk,
Again I keep love's trysting hour,
And catch thy low-toned talk.

Mine yet, in some sweet, subtle sense,
In stillness, where no rude note jars,
Where amaranth blooms, and innocence,
And sorrel's silver stars.

Stronger Than Pride.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "WEAKER THAN A WOMAN," "A GOLDEN DAWN," "WHICH LOVED HIM BEST," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XI.—(CONTINUED).

I AM afraid I have made a very hasty promise," Vane said. "I must see what work we have on hand."

But Lord Charnwood would take no excuse.

"You are not well, Sir Raye says. You want a holiday, and a holiday you must have. I shall expect you as we arranged."

When he was gone, Vane went home at once to Sir Raye and told him his difficulty.

"It is so near home," he said; "I do not see how I can go to Lord Charnwood's. I should feel like an impostor."

"I do not see why," remarked Sir Raye. "When I adopted you, you gave up home; that is, you exchanged your home for mine; and the arrangement was agreed to by all. You changed your name and your home."

"I do not like it," returned Vane. "I shall feel inclined all the time to say that I come from that neighborhood and who I am.

"Again, I might meet some one who would recognize me; and, if that were the case, I could not conceal my identity."

"There is no fear," said Sir Raye. "You were only a pretty-faced boy when you left the farm; now any Duke's son might be proud to have your face, manners, and figure.

"I wish you to go. Lord Charnwood is one of my best friends. I should like you to go.

"In the world we must do as the world does. Make up your mind, pack up your portmanteau, and Heaven speed you. Stay as long as you wish; I can manage pretty well."

But Vane did not like the idea that he should be so near home and yet ignore it.

He would have given much to have avoided the journey and declined the invitation.

CHAPTER XII.

VANE sat at the window of a first-class carriage, his heart stirred to deepest emotion, and his eyes dim with a mist like tears.

The old loves and hopes of his boyhood came before him.

He remembered his pretty village-love Marjory Lynn, with her rich brown hair and red-rose face.

How Marjory had loved him when they were children together!

She would not have sent him away and made his heart ache by a few proud cold words.

The old homestead, the rush of the mill-stream, the clover meadows, and the broad river with its green banks, all came back clearly to his mind.

What visions of greatness had come to him there!

Had they been realized? Doubly so in many respects.

He had never dared to hope that such honors as the world had given to him would be his.

But he was not happy; his life was barren and empty to him.

He had given up home, father, mother, sister, and brother.

He had renounced all the love and the friends of his youth; and in return he had wealth, position, and honor—but no love.

"Perhaps it would have been better for me if I had stayed at the Meadow Farm," he said to himself, "for honors and riches are barren and empty without love."

The handsome face was shadowed as Vane stood in the little station of Loyenham.

There, where the trees were greenest and the land was most fair, lay the pretty town of Holwood—the town that, as a child, he had believed to be the most wonderful in the world.

And his home, the gray farm-house, lay just beyond it.

On the other side lay the lordly lands of King's Clyffe.

At the station a carriage awaited him, in which he was quickly conveyed to his destination.

Lord Charnwood met him in the hall, welcomed him most heartily, took him to Lady Charnwood's boudoir, and introduced him to his wife as an especial friend and favorite.

"I hear that you have not been well, Mr. Vibart," said her ladyship kindly. "The air of King's Clyffe is considered very fine and bracing. I hope you will grow well and strong in it."

Vane said to himself that he must be out of health, for the gentle voice of Lady Charnwood had brought tears to his eyes.

Then he was taken to his room; but Lord Charnwood, who was really fond of him, could not leave him long alone.

"Come out with me, Mr. Vibart," he said, "and we will have a stroll through the grounds. Then we can join the ladies at the five o'clock tea."

Vane was only too pleased to talk to his kindly genial host while they walked through the beautiful grounds of King's Clyffe.

Lord Charnwood said suddenly—

"I must not forget to describe our party to you. We are rarely fortunate. We have just now under our roof the most beautiful woman in England and the richest peer. A suspicious combination, is it not?"

Vane said "Yes" with white lips and a beating heart.

To him there was but one beautiful woman in the world—only one.

"We have also the greatest artist, Mr. Holme, and one of the finest singers in Europe, although she is not professional—Lady Fayne. Quite a galaxy, is it not?"

But Vane asked with feverish lips—

"Who is 'the most beautiful woman in England?'"

Lord Charnwood laughed.

"Not to know that is to be out of the world," he said. "The loveliest woman in England is Lady Lilias Audley; and she, I am proud to say, is visiting my wife."

Vane did not swoon, which seemed to him afterwards somewhat wonderful, nor did he cry out, but he walked on for some minutes in silence by Lord Charnwood's side.

"You must put on strong armor, Mr. Vibart," continued his lordship; "for, besides being the most beautiful, she is considered the proudest girl in England."

How the words stung him!

He saw again the beautiful proud face bending over the meadow-sweet.

He heard again the words that had cut him off and cast him from her—"It can never be."

Lord Charnwood had not noticed his agitation; he went on—

"Lady Lilias is to my mind perfect. Have you ever seen her? Her hair is like dead gold, and her eyes—well, you must see them to appreciate them.

"She has been the reigning beauty for the last three years. There is no one to come near her. I am a great admirer of beautiful women," added his lordship quite frankly.

Then the question that had been burning on Vane's lips found voice.

"If she is so beautiful, how is it that she has not married?"

The voice was not like his own, and his face had the pallor of death.

"I do not know. At first people said she was too proud to marry even a prince; but I hear she has changed very much during the last year, and the general opinion is that beautiful Lady Lilias loves some one she is too proud to marry."

Vane was silent again, for he could find no words; and, when he did speak, it was to change the subject.

Would the beautiful face that he had seen bending over the meadow-sweet have a smile for him?

"You look far from well," said Lord Charnwood, when they separated. "Perhaps you would rather not join the ladies?"

"Such a change as that would do any one good. We have no ladies at Lulworth," said Vane laughingly; but there was no laughter in his heart.

Lady Charnwood was very fond of a five o'clock tea.

It was to her one of the most pleasant hours of the day—an easy happy hour.

The tea was served in a pretty room known as the white room, a bright, warm, sunny apartment always full of sweet flowers.

On this June afternoon, the long French windows of the white room were open, and the curtains of fine white lace were gently stirred by the wind.

The fountains in the pretty rose-garden played merrily, and the song of the birds made sweeter music than the ripple of woman's laughter.

Lady Charnwood, a most fair and gracious lady, presided at the little table and dispensed cups of tea and very choice fruit.

Near her sat Lady Fayne, whose face was not beautiful, but was so full of expression that no beauty of form or coloring was equal to it.

Near the window, surrounded as she always was by a little circle of admirers, sat Lady Lilias Audley, looking more beautiful, more queenly than ever.

There was some subtle change in her face.

It was even lovelier, but its color was somewhat lessened, and the expression was infinitely sweeter and softer.

She looked like a fair young queen in her dress of cream-colored silk with trailing white lace, and a spray of white jessamine in her dead-gold hair.

She held a peach in her hand, and was admiring the down on it, when the door opened and Lord Charnwood, with Vane, entered the room.

The young Duke of Raysfort, the greatest matrimonial prize in England, was bending over her, thinking that this lovely woman with the dead-gold hair, holding the peach in her white hand, formed the fairest picture he had ever seen.

He saw her start suddenly and grow deathly pale, and the peach fell from her hand.

He saw her shiver as with cold, and the beautiful figure trembled.

"You are ill, Lady Lilias?" said the Duke.

"No; I am tired. The room is warm, and there are too many flowers."

She rose abruptly; but fate was not propitious.

There stood Lord Charnwood, and with him the man who loved her more than his life.

"Lady Audley," said the master of King's Clyffe, "may I introduce Mr. Vibart to you?"

She summoned all her courage, and raised her eyes to his, then held out her hand to him.

"I have met Mr. Vibart before," she said gently. "He is an old friend;" and Lord Charnwood left them together.

"I did not know that you were expected here," she remarked.

"Nor did I dream of seeing you, Lady Lilias," he answered.

She walked to the window and he followed her.

"If my presence annoys you," he said, "I will make some excuse, and leave King's Clyffe at once;" and there was a ring of passion in his voice.

"Why should you?" she returned. "You must know that it is a pleasure to me to see you again."

She spoke as though she were compelled to tell the truth even in spite of herself.

"You are not looking well, Mr. Vibart," she added.

"I am not well," he replied. "I find life very hard, harder than I had dreamed."

"I have not found it very easy," she said gently.

She half hesitated, and then added, "I have thought of you very often since that morning."

"And I have thought of nothing but you," he said. "I have tried to forget you—I have tried to drown all thoughts of you; but I might as well have tried to live without a heart beating in my breast. What cruelty of fate has brought me hither to suffer all the old pain and anguish over again?"

Her exquisite face was raised shyly to his.

"Perhaps you will not suffer. Life teaches many things. I have learned one lesson since you went away."

Then Lady Charnwood joined them.

"I had no idea that you were old friends," she said.

"Mr. Vibart was with us for a short time at Ulverscroft," answered Lady Lilias. "The beautiful bridge over the river was his design."

She decided that there should be no mistake this time.

He should not think she was ashamed of him.

For she, the proudest girl in England, had found out for herself one secret, and it was that with all her heart she had learned to love the ardent hopeless young lover who had never dreamed of winning her.

Many had loved her, but none so well as he.

From the first the intensity of his love had touched her.

Of course his suit was all nonsense, and could never come to anything.

A marriage between the queen of beauty, the heiress of Ulverscroft, and a professional man was absurd to even think about.

Yet she loved him as she could never love prince or peer.

The day came when "the proudest girl in England" owned to herself that the whole happiness of her life had gone with Vane Fraser Vibart.

She had thought she would never marry.

Title, money, position—nothing could tempt her, nothing save love: and love and she parted on the day when she sent Vane from her.

She had repented it; she could never understand why from all the world she had chosen him.

She said to herself that if that morning were to come over again she should speak differently.

But he had passed out of her life, and her pride would never let her call him back again—never!

But, now that fate or fortune had brought them together again, now that she stood once more in his presence, the old glamor fell upon her, the old love stirred in her heart; and she knew, if he spoke to her again, what her answer would be.

She was so kind, so gracious, so sweet in her manner to him now that he was bewildered.

She sat next to him during dinner, and talked with a brilliancy quite new to her.

She wanted to know all that he had done since they parted.

"Would it really interest you?" he asked wonderingly.

"More than anything else you can tell me," she replied.

Then he gave her an outline of all he had done.

"You have no idea," she said, "how beautiful the bridge looks over the Ulver. Will you never come to see it again?"

"I should imagine not," he replied; and yet a strange happiness was stirring in his heart. Why was she so kind to him? If she knew that nothing but an unhappy love could be between them, why was she so gracious, so kind, so sweet to him? Yet he dared not think, dared not hope—he was bewildered.

Into Vane's mind came other thoughts. How near he was to his old home, and how little any one surmised it!

What a false position it seemed, that he, the son of a poor farmer, should be a welcome guest at King's Clyffe, where his father would enter in lowly guise!

Yet his genius had won the place for him; and there was no need to be ashamed of his home.

There were times when he almost longed to reveal who he was, and to say boldly, "I am the son of a farmer who lives near Holwood."

And again there were times when he shuddered lest any accident should make it known.

When dinner was over, and the music began in the drawing-room, he found himself once more by her side.

The light fell full upon her, upon her figure of imperial beauty and grace, upon her exquisitely lovely face, upon the masses of hair with diamonds shining in it, and upon the artistic dress of rich white lace trimmed with long green grasses.

"You are fond of music," she said, with one of her irresistible smiles, which went straight to Vane's heart. "You will be delighted to hear Lady Fayne. She is one of finest singers I have heard."

"My delight will be doubled if you will allow me to remain somewhere near you, Lady Lilias."

She did not answer him in words; but there was something in her face which told him that the delight would be doubled for her.

Then the young Duke led Lady Fayne to the piano, and Vane and Lady Lilias went to one of the long open windows.

Vane owned to himself that he had never known what music or magic meant before.

Lady Lilias had turned from the brilliant light of the lamps, and in the moonlight her proud fair face was all sweetness.

Her dead-gold hair and diamonds shone brightly, and her proud superb beauty was softened.

Clear, fresh, and magnificent, the rich contralto voice of Lady Fayne rose and filled the room with grandest music—a voice so sympathetic that it brought tears to the eyes of those who heard it.

The song she sang—"Three Kisses"—was strangely sweet—a song sad as it was sweet.

And these were the words—

"Three, only three, my darling,
Separate, solemn, and slow
Not like the swift and joyous ones
We used to know—

Then we kissed because we loved each other,
Simply to taste love's sweet,
And lavished our kisses as summer
Lavishes heat—

But as they kiss whose hearts are wrung
When hope and fear are spent,
And nothing is left to give except
A sacrament.

"First of the three, my darling,
Is sacred unto pain:
We have hurt each other often,
We shall again.

Then we pine because we miss each other,
And do not understand
How the written words are so much colder
Than eye or hand.

I kiss thee, dear, for all such pain
Which we may give or take,
Buried, forgiven, before it comes,
For our love's sake.

"The second kiss, my darling,
Is full of joy's sweet thrill;
We have blest each other always,
We always will.

We shall reach until we feel each other
Beyond all time and space;
We shall listen till we hear each other
In every place.

The earth is full of messengers,
Which love sends to and fro;
I kiss thee, darling, for all joy
Which we shall know.

The last kiss—ah, my darling,
My love, I cannot see
Through my tears as I remember
What it may be!

We may die and never see each other
Die, with no time to give
Any sign that our hearts are faithful
To die as live.

Token of what they will not see
Who see our parting breath,
This last one kiss, my darling, seals
The seal of death."

Slowly, clearly, distinctly each word fell.

And the fair proud face in the moonlight grew paler and sweeter.

Once again Vane saw a mist of tears in the beautiful eyes, and his heart beat quickly.

He drew nearer to her, so near that the sweet subtle perfume from the flowers she wore reached him.

"If you gave one of those three kisses, Lady Lilias," he asked, "which would it be?"

There was no anger, nothing but love in the eyes she raised to his.

"It would be the seal of death," she answered.

He drew nearer still to her in the shadow of the curtains; something in her face told him that he might.

He took the white hand, bent over it, and kissed it with passion too deep for words.

"I do not care if you kill me for it," he said. "I have looked at your hands and have longed to kiss them until I have almost gone mad with my own longing. You may do your worst to me, Lady Lilias."

"This is my worst," she answered, holding out the other hand to him.

She saw that he had grown pale and that he trembled.

"How good you are to me," he cried—"and yet how cruel! It would be more merciful a thousand times to drive me with cruel words from your presence. I am drinking poison."

"I have no wish to drive you from me," she answered.

"I am well content that you should be here; I have not been so happy as this since you went away."

The proud face drooped, and a burning flush came over it. Vane was dazed and bewildered.

"The proudest girl in England" to say this to him—the Earl's daughter, beautiful Lady Lilias, to speak so to him!

"Ah, Heaven have pity on me!" he cried. "You are driving me mad. I have lost ——"

He stopped suddenly, for Lord Charnwood laid his hand upon his shoulder and asked if they were admiring the moonlight.

CHAPTER XIII.

IT was a lovely morning, clear and cloudless.

The whole party at King's Clyffe had decided upon a long ride and drive round the country.

Lady Charnwood had declined.

Lady Fayne rode a fine horse that she had brought with her, and Lady Lilias rode Lord Charnwood's famous Bonnie Bell.

The heiress excelled as a horsewoman; and her beautiful figure was never seen to greater advantage than on horseback.

The young Duke, Captain Lorme, and Vane formed her escort, while Lord Charnwood rode with Lady Fayne.

The sweet air was full of fragrance.

They rode along roads where tall trees met overhead and formed an arch of green leaves, and through lovely green lanes, where flowers grew in the hedgerows and the soft sweet grass under their feet was like a carpet.

Vane found himself by the side of Lady Lilias.

She could not have been kinder to him; the sunlight was not brighter than she.

She never once avoided him, never turned from him.

In vain the young Duke of Raysfort tried his best to engross her and to attract her attention; it was useless.

In vain did the Captain display his superior horsemanship, and try to engage her in conversation.

All her smiles and her favors were for Vane.

He saw it, and it bewildered him.

Could it really be possible after all that she had relented, and that she cared for him?

The very thought of it made his heart beat wildly, and sent a glow to his face.

All at once he awoke from his dream. Where was he?

There stood the row of beautiful lime-trees, there was the deep clear river, there the mill-stream with its rush of water, and there—ah, Heaven, there stood the pretty gray farm-house with its veil of flowers and foliage!

A mist seemed to come before his eyes and for a short time to hide it all.

He was at home again at the Meadow Farm, the home he had left so long ago to become a gentleman. Lady Lilias turned her face to him.

"Look at that pretty picturesque spot!" she said. "That is my ideal of a farm-house. Look at the honeysuckle round the windows, and the white pigeons whirling round.

"How pretty the cows look drinking from that clear pool! I am so warm and so thirsty! I wonder if they would give me a glass of milk?"

The Duke of Raysfort laughed.

"Yes," he answered, "I am sure they would, and remember your visit all their lives."

"I can picture the inside," said Lady Lilias. "It is just like one of the interiors of the old Dutch painters—a clean kitchen, with everything shining and bright, a kindly, cleanly house-mother, a table with a white cloth, a homely brown jar. It was worth riding all the way for. What do you say, Mr. Vibart?

"Shall we try to get some milk? Look at that pleasant old-fashioned garden, with the sweet peas all in flower! I should like to walk there. Do you think the good people would mind?"

Vane was white to the lips—white, he knew, with cowardly shame and fear. He hated himself for it.

Yet, with the young Duke and the gay worldly Captain alongside, with Lady Lilias's proud beautiful face smiling on him, he could no more have spoken than he could have flown.

He longed to say, "This is my home. I was born here. I am a son of the house. Laugh, sneer as you will, I am not ashamed of it."

These thoughts were in his mind, and the words came to his lips; but he had not the moral courage to utter them.

"What do you think, Mr. Vibart?" asked Lady Lilias. "Would those good people receive us?"

He turned away his face lest she should see its pallor.

There on the other side was the old sweet familiar rush of the mill-stream—it seemed to sing to him with a thousand voices that this was his home.

He was compelled to answer her.

"I am sure they would be pleased to see you," he said, in a very strange, husky voice.

"Will you not accompany me?" she asked, half surprised, half pained at his manner.

"I—I would rather not," he replied, slowly.

The young Duke, seeing his chance, said—

"Lady Lilias, I am even more anxious than yourself to see the interior of what I am sure is a picturesque old house."

They dismounted.

Vane watched them enter the house where the first years of his life had been spent.

Some of the men in the farm-yard came and attended to the horses.

Lord Charnwood and Lady Fayne joined the party, laughingly declaring that a glass of milk would be the most welcome thing they could have.

Vane left his horse with the others and walked to some little distance.

His heart was torn with love and regret.

Never had the star of hope shone so brightly before him, never had the light of love fallen on him so fully.

It seemed to him, although he hardly dared to believe it, that the beautiful proud lady he had loved so long and so hopelessly was beginning to care for him at last, and that she was unbending to him in her proud gracious fashion.

If, just now—while she was learning to love him perhaps—he had made known his birth and parentage, that would steel her against him.

Yet he loved his early home.

All the manhood and courage in him rose in hot rebellion against his awful silence.

But to speak would be to lose his love, or to lose the hope that was growing from it—a hope far dearer than his life.

He stood once more by the old mill-stream.

How it all came back to him, the sunlit morning when Sir Raye Vibart had spoken to him about the boat!

How much had happened to him since then!

One by one the honors he had received passed through his mind.

He had left home a poor and unknown boy.

Now he held every fair gift of the world in his hand.

The week before he came to King's Clyffe Sir Raye Vibart, having no children, no kindred, had formally made his will in his favor, and had adopted him as his sole heir.

He had left him the fine estate of Lulworth, with all the money that he had accumulated.

He had left him all that he had in the world.

He would now be an excellent match for any lady in the land, so far as money went.

He remembered that as he stood with the sound of the mill-stream in his ear.

He looked across the fields.

There in the far-off meadow—they called it the oak meadow when he was a child—with his gray head bent and his tall figure drooping, he saw his father busily at work, and his brother Desford was helping him.

His heart warmed to to them.

He longed to go to them, to throw his arms round his father's neck, and cry out to him that he loved him, that he was not ashamed of him.

But, if he did so, what of his love, what of Lady Lilias?

He could not lose her.

He would rather have died a hundred deaths.

"It is a false position," he said to himself. "If I had my life to live over again, I would avoid it. I have a place amongst these great people of the world; and yet, if my birth and origin were known, they would decline to associate with me. Lady Lilias would. I remember what she said about farmer's sons."

Then he saw the whole party return.

He walked with slow steps down the lane.

Suddenly he saw Lady Lilias talking to a most beautiful girl—a picture of healthy blooming country beauty—with a tall, lithe rounded figure full of supple grace, a very shapely head proudly set on grand shoulders, a dark handsome face glowing with health, fresh red lips, teeth whiter than pearls, dark bright eyes, and dusky rippling hair—a girl whose beauty took him by surprise.

Looking at her he recognised his sister Kate, who, years before, had hung around his neck and begged him to leave home to be made a gentleman.

How well he remembered it, and how his heart went out to her!

Lady Lilias was talking kindly to her; and Kate held a bunch of sweet honeysuckle in her hand, which had evidently been gathered for her ladyship.

He saw another thing too—the Duke of Raysfort was looking at her with admiring eyes, and Vane trembled with impotent rage.

The Duke, while Lady Lilias walked on, stayed behind.

He begged some of the honeysuckle; and Kate, with a bright flush and flattered smile dimpling her face, gave it to him.

Then—and the sight of it enraged Vane—the Duke laughingly touched the lovely face with his fingers, and Vane knew that he was saying something about the beautiful color of it.

At that moment he could have struck the young Duke to the earth.

He gave one quick glance around, but could not see his mother.

His heart was heavy and sore in spite of the smile with which Lady Lilias greeted him.

"How ill you look, Mr. Vibart!" she said. "I could not imagine why you would not go in with us. Why did you not tell me you were ill?"

His hands trembled and his lips quivered; he was filled with a sense of unworthiness that was gall and wormwood to him.

Yet what could he do?

"Let us walk on for a few minutes," said Lady Lilias. "What a lovely lane this is! I shall sketch that pretty, picturesque, old farm-house some day before I leave King's Clyffe. Look at this beautiful sweet honeysuckle."

She held it out to him, and he, knowing where it had grown, felt that the touch of the tender graceful tendrils was as the touch of hot flame to him.

She smiled as she continued.

"I knew it was a model farm-house. Everything in the kitchen was bright and shining, just as you see it in those wonderful Dutch pictures; and the mistress was a clean comely woman, so kind and nice in her manner."

If she had known, if she had but dreamed that she was his mother!

Still smiling, she resumed—

"You will be sorry, too, that you missed another treat. I saw the prettiest girl in that farm-house that I have ever seen in my life—such a rosy, dimpled, blushing face. She reminded me of a May morning and everything in the world most sweet. I do not believe you are interested."

The eyes that met hers were so full of pain that Lady Lilias came to the conclusion that he was suffering deeply, and she said no more.

* * * * *

The same night the Duke of Raysfort said to Captain Lorme—

"I shall call at the Meadow Farm again. The girl we saw there is the most beautiful I have ever seen."

"Not so beautiful as Lady Lilias," replied the Captain.

"Much more to my taste. I like dark faces with a rose-bloom. I shall call there again, for the face haunts me."

CHAPTER XIV.

A MOONLIT night—and such a beautiful moon.

It hung like a clear lamp in the blue sky, and the golden stars surrounded it as courtiers do a queen.

The dinner was over at King's Clyffe. Lady Fayne had delighted every one with her singing.

Tempted by the lovely moonlight, many of the guests had gone out into the grounds.

Lady Fayne was talking sentimentally to the young Duke; Captain Lorme would fain have done the same thing, but Lady Lilias would not listen.

The moonlight lay like a silver veil over the fair earth, making the night almost as bright and clear as day.

The water thrown up from the fountains was like silver; and the tall trees threw graceful shadows on the grass.

During dinner there had been some conversation about the pretty farm-house, and Vane had listened to it with inexpressible pain.

He hated the false colors under which he appeared, yet he could not change them now.

He knew that Sir Raye would be greatly displeased if he did so, as one of the conditions of his adoption had been that he should give up home.

Vane felt miserably unhappy, and he wished that he had never accepted Lord Charnwood's invitation—but then he would not have seen Lady Lilias, and she was so kind and gracious to him.

He awoke from his reverie to find that Lady Lilias was near him.

White lilies were in the dead gold of her hair and in her dress of white silk with rich trailing laces, diamonds sparkled on her lovely arms and neck, and a smile was on her beautiful face—sweeter, Vane thought, than the face of woman had ever worn before.

"What are you thinking about so deeply, Mr. Vibart?" she asked. "I have been watching you for the last five minutes; you look really as though you would never smile again."

As she spoke, she walked slowly from the long open French window on to the terrace, and he followed her.

He watched her as she drew over her shoulders a wrapper of white cashmere with golden fringe.

There in the moonlight her beauty gained fresh radiance, for the light fell directly upon her charming face and her golden hair.

She seemed to expect that he would accompany her.

"Every one prefers the moonlight," she said slowly: "we are not singular in our taste."

In a few minutes they had reached the gardens where the lilies stood in thick clusters and the odorous roses filled the air with perfume.

"You look like the queen of the lilies," said Vane abruptly; "and as for me, Lady Lilias, my reason is going again, my senses are leaving me!"

There was no anger in the fair, beautiful face.

"Remind me, will you, of my folly," he went on—"remind me that you are as far above me as the stars. Send me away with cold and cruel ridicule, send me from you with bitter words, for I love you—oh, Heaven, how I love you—and how utterly in vain!"

But no rebuke came from the sweet proud lips, no scorn was in the beautiful eyes.

He saw a warm tremulous flush which rose even to the roots of her hair—he saw a tender wistful smile in her eyes.

He was bewildered.

"Send me away, Lady Lilias, while I have the strength to go," he said. "Could any man keep sane while you smile so kindly? I love you. As I stand here I could worship you! The moonlight lies on your golden hair and kisses your beautiful face—ah, happy night! The sweet night wind caresses you and stirs the white lilies you wear—ah, happy wind!

"For one touch of your white hands I would die! It is worse than madness this outpouring; send me away while I have strength to go!"

But no words came from her lips, which had grown strangely pale.

"You will never forgive me, Lady Lilias. I cannot help it. I love you so well that, standing here under the night skies, I swear to you that for one loving word from your lips I would die—I would die," he repeated.

His voice died away in a long, low sob.

Had he gone mad, or was he only dreaming?

A white hand, on which shone rare gems in the moonlight, was laid upon his, and a sweet voice whispered to him—

"You need not die."

For one moment his brain reeled and he thought he should swoon.

She was so near to him that the sweet, subtle odor of the lilies she wore reached him—so near, that her face was close to his.

"I will go to-morrow," he said; and his voice was heavy with tears. "You will forgive me—you will bear with my folly. To-morrow I will go, and I will pray Heaven never to bring me near you again."

"You need not go," whispered the sweet voice again.

She never forgot the cry that came from his lips—a cry of wonder, pain, fear, and love.

"You do not mean to be cruel to me—you mean to be kind and gracious; but your words are sweetest poison. You do not understand how you torture me."

She laid her other hand upon his.

"I am not the one who does not understand," she said, shyly and sweetly.

She bent her shapely head nearer to him her face crimson, and her eyes drooping from his.

"You will not understand?" she interrogated.

"I—I dare not!" he cried. "You told me that it could never be—you sent me away—you left me with my heart crushed, even as you had crushed the meadow-sweet in your hands!"

"Listen to me," she said. "I am sorry that I crushed the meadow-sweet. I wish that I had it in my hands now—fresh and living."

There was a note of passion in her voice, and he heard it.

What could it mean?

He trembled like a leaf in the wind.

"If," she continued, "I had the meadow-sweet now, I should not crush it; and, if you said the same words now, I should—answer them differently."

He could not believe it, although both her hands were upon his, and her face was close to him: although she was looking at him with infinite tenderness, and the very light of love was in her face and shining in her eyes, he could not believe it.

"Do you understand now," she said, gently.

He answered her almost roughly.

"If I were to find this a jest, a dream——"

"It is neither," she replied earnestly. "Why will you not believe?"

"Because," he cried in a voice shaken with passion, "it is incredible! Because I have never, from the first moment I saw you, had any hope! Because—Oh, Heaven, can it be true?"

"It is true," she whispered; "and you must never call me the proudest girl in England again. I will tell you the truth. I loved you even when I sent you away; but I would not own it to myself—I would not admit it. I acquired a habit of saying over and over again to myself, "It will not do," until I really grew to believe that it would not do. I found out my mistake after I had sent you away. I found that, though I held as my own almost every good gift, they were almost useless to me because I had not love. I found that I had sent away with you the happiness of my whole life. I should never have sent for you; but Providence has brought you back to me. I have mourned in my heart

as people mourn for the dead. Now do you believe me, Vane."

She never forgo the cry of rapturous delight that came from him, nor the sudden joyful radiance that overspread his face.

"I believe it—at last," he cried. "Thank Heaven, thank Heaven!"—and his whole fra ne trembled.

"Forgive me," he said; "you do not know what it is to me. I feel as though I were coming from death to life. Oh, my darling, my love, how shall I ever thank you?"

He whispered his thanks as he gathered her to him and kissed the beautiful face that he had never dreamed would rest on his breast.

A few moments afterwards, when his passionate love-words had died away, she said to him—

"You are trembling still, Vane."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

VAL'S GOVERNESS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "MY SAILOR BOYS," "A FALSE FRIEND," "AS ROSES FADE," "MABEL MAY," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.—[CONTINUED.]

WHERE have you been, my dear boy?" asked Lady Hildyard, gently tucking the end of a fur rug round little Val.

"I came down to Weston last Thursday, to stay a week or so with Dick," he replied; "but, as you know, aunt, Dick is married, in fact, very much married!

"Good Heavens, the fellow can't have a decent day's shooting now, because he must be home for afternoon tea, or she is miserable and he is miserable, and the whole affair is miserable."

"Who else was there?" inquired Flora.

"Eh, what, where?" said Sir Wilton, waking up and looking round.

"Nowhere, papa; go to sleep again," replied Flora sharply.

Sir Wilton sank quietly back in his corner, and resumed his sleep, whilst Teddie continued his grievances.

"Who was there? Oh, two or three people who ought to have been ashamed to stay and spoil Dick's matrimonial bliss! Now, I don't care to go home at two p. m. or to be met at by Dick, who is not happy in his mind as he don't know what his 'owness' is doing, and he shoots a bit 'wild'; and I don't care for afternoon tipple for ever.

"In fact," he added, tugging at his red moustache, "I don't approve of drinking."

"Then you are a reformed character, Teddie?" said Lady Hildyard.

"Why, certainly!"

"How did you get away?" asked Flora.

Teddie, who had been for the last five minutes trying to get another look at Nellie's face, gave it up as hopeless for the present, and replied—

"Letters, my dear cousin, letters, which came are often a blessing to me.

"I could stand it no longer; and, when the post came in this morning, I was grieved to gray-headedness to find I must leave them.

"I am so sorry, quoth my hostess. Dick will miss you dreadfully. I was equally sorry; but, alas, et-cetera!"

Silence reigned for a short time, only disturbed by a little nasal music from Sir Wilton or a restless kick from Val, as the train rushed on through the darkness.

Nellie, turning her head from the window became aware that the stranger had moved slightly in her direction, and appeared to be engaged in trying to make out the country, which, by the way, he could not possibly discern.

"Who on earth is she?" he thought. "She's the prettiest girl I've seen for a long time, and looks thorough-bred! Wish she'd turn round, and let's have another look at her eyes.

"I know her lashes by heart already. No friend of Flora's, I'll bet! If Flora has a chum, she's sure to be an ugly one. I believe she is governess to that young beggar, Val! Lucky chap!"

"What have you done with the boy aunt?" he inquired aloud, turning his eyes from Val's sleeping form, round which Nellie had her arm.

Lady Hildyard, who, like her daughter, was nearly asleep, roused herself, and in a tone gave the young man a full and particular account of Val's loss, recovery, et-cæteras.

Her ladyship thought no one could possibly overhear.

But her feelings always overcame her when recounting the fearful event.

And Teddie, who listened more attentively than usual to his aunt, could see, by keeping his head towards Nellie, that the soft oval cheek and even the little ear had flushed crimson.

Lady Hildyard wiped her eyes, and closed them with a sigh of pleasure at having again gone over her favorite tale; and Teddie returned with interest to the contemplation of the obscured landscape.

At the next station the noise and bustle had the effect of waking Val, and he promptly pushed off his coverings and sat up.

"Well, Nellie, aren't we nearly home yet? I can tell you I'm quite—— Hallo, Ted, how did you get here?

"Why didn't you wake me, Nellie, when you saw him?"

Before however any answer could be given to his questions, Val had plunged into a full and frank confession that Ted Galbraith was his cousin and that Nellie O'Ferra was his governess, and thus brought about an introduction, of which Teddie was not slow to avail himself.

Then the conversation drifted on to the country they were passing through, now dimly visible in the pale morning light. Teddie was amazed at his own comprehensive knowledge of English agriculture; but then, it must be mentioned, he had a powerful imagination, and Miss O'Ferra listened intently, with her sweet gray eyes fixed upon the ever-varying scenes they were speed through.

She was just pointing out a little bit of landscape that resembled her old home when looking round, she met Flora's eyes fixed coldly upon her.

With a slight flush, Nellie subsided, and Teddie, who constantly watched her fair face, turned to see what had caused her to pause.

Flora immediately smiled sweetly, and, pointing to a crown-shaped hill in the hazy distance, said—

"The Shepherd's Crown looks like home, doesn't it, Teddie? Thank Heaven, we shall soon be at Marsh End! Are you coming with us?"

"Thanks, no. Must go on to town; but I'll run down in a week or two, if aunt will have me," replied Teddie, with a nod in the direction of her ladyship, and casting a furtive glance at Miss O'Ferra.

But Nellie's eyes were fixed upon the far away "Shepherd's Crown," vainly trying in the dim light to make out the crumbling walls of the old towers on its summit. Mr. Galbraith had been telling her how, hundreds of years ago, in the barbaric ages, the old reprobate Hildyards had held those towers against unnumbered foes

The "Crown" was the most homelike bit of country she had seen since she left Ireland, and when she lost sight of it a little "Oh!" followed by a sigh, escaped her.

"Am I too heavy for you, Nellie?" inquired Val.

"Never mind, when I get a big fellow like Teddie, you shall sit on my knee all the way to Paris and India; and that's an awfully long way."

A second time the tell-tale scarlet overspread Nellie's face, and Miss Hildyard burst into a loud derisive laugh, which had the effect of thoroughly rousing Sir Wilton who announced, with the air of one who had just elucidated an astounding mystery, that it was seven o'clock.

As he spoke, the train glided into Cromely, the last stop before London.

Here the Hildyards got out, having a drive of eight miles back to Marsh End, for, as the little station belonging to that place was not of sufficient importance for the express to stop at, Sir Wilton preferred, rather than come by a slow train to overshoot his journey.

By doing so, with the drive, and one thing and another, he saved exactly twenty minutes.

But it made him happy.

Teddie insisted on going on to town, but promised to return before Christmas.

"And bring some men with you Teddie," said Flora.

"I'll do my best by you. I know a lot of jovial fellows who will gladly come, eh, Flora?" replied Mr. Galbraith, as he handed out Nellie, adding, as he gave her hand a slight squeeze, "In any case, count on me."

For the rest of his journey Nellie's face haunted him, nor could he rid himself of the idea that it wore anything but a pleased expression at his audacity.

"By Jove, the little beauty has some spirit, I can see! We'll break a lance or two when I go down.

"What eyes! How the charming Flora does snub her. I'd back the little governess any day, though!"

CHAPTER II.

SHUT up in the Hildyards' comfortable family barouche, for Val would not be separated from Nellie, and Lady Hildyard would not be separated from Val, Nellie's little charge, refreshed by his sleep, chatted incessantly, telling her who lived here and who there, with scraps of their family history, while every now and then he nodded with the air of a duke to the country-people going to their work, for Val knew them all.

Warden Chase was a magnificent mansion, built in the style in vogue at the time of the Restoration.

It stood on a slight eminence, and beyond, forming a beautiful background to the house, rose a densely-wooded hill, while in front lay a clear lake.

The house faced the west, a broad terrace running round the front and south sides; and Nellie was glad to find that her schoolroom faced the south, for all the windows that way commanded a good view of the "Crown," and she felt somehow a strong affection for that hill.

Val, who insisted on dragging her all through his domains before breakfast, told her there was a path through the tangled woodlands and under-growth that skirted the lake.

"The Crown belongs to us," he said, with unconscious vanity; "but we let any one go on to it."

"We'll go, fly on like; and I'll show you the funny little gun, and we can both shoot. Let us go to-day, shall we?"

"No, indeed, Valentine," laughed Nellie "Why, I should have to carry you half the way.

"It is much too far after our long journey dear; but we will go soon, and we can pretend we are ancient barons standing a siege."

This satisfied the little fellow; and after breakfast Nellie ran up to the room Mrs. Cole, the lady's-maid, had informed her would be hers.

It was a pretty room, and she went at once to the window, and, throwing it open, stood and gazed with delight at the beautiful scene before her.

She looked down on the drive, which she could trace for some distance winding through the trees on its way to the park, while the morning sun shone down upon the frosty earth, causing the shrubs, trees, and grass to glitter in its cheering rays.

And far away she could see the snow-capped hills standing out like hoary-headed monarchs of Nature.

"How lovely England is!" thought the girl. "How beautiful here—and my poor Jack and Maude shut up in smoky Dublin!

"How I wish they were here to enjoy this lovely scene and pure atmosphere!"—and, with a sigh, she turned away from the window.

Noticing that her trunks had been brought up, Nellie set to work to arrange her property.

This having been accomplished, she twisted up afresh her bright hair, and changed her dress for a dark green cloth one, the donning of which brought back painful memories of her old life.

For in that dress had she not gone with her father, morning after morning, round the dilapidated but dearly loved home, to come back with her hands full of flowers from the neglected garden and place them in the quaint old-fashioned vases, while the dead and gone O'Ferras' painted eyes seemed to watch her from where they hung against the time-worn wainscoting.

It was too cold to stay upstairs, she decided, with a shiver.

"I suppose nursery-governesses don't have fires in their rooms?" she cogitated. "I think I'll go to the schoolroom, as that is where I shall live.

"I really think I shall get on here nicely, for Val is a dear child.

"I wonder if Lady Hildyard will let me take him out in the park this morning? I long for a run after that long cramping ride."

Opening her door, she tripped down the long corridor, pausing at each window to admire the view, then down the grand staircase, and, after several wrong turnings, she arrived at the schoolroom, and proceeded to make a round of inspection.

It was not a very large room.

But, like everything else appertaining to Val, it was carefully arranged by his devoted mother, and dignified, by-the-way, with the name of Val's study, though the time that young gentleman devoted to studying there would, if counted up, average about half an hour a day.

The two long windows looked out over the terrace and French garden, while beyond were the lake and the Crown.

"A splendid look-out, at any rate," thought Nellie, turning to survey the interior.

The high carved mantelpiece and tiled hearth pleased her.

Above this hung Val's favorite picture, a gorgeous hunting scene in a massive frame.

Some mischievously-disposed person had caused "Tally Ho!" "Hark forward!" and other gems of field-lingo to issue on scrolls from the lips of the gentleman in scarlet tumbling over the break-neck fence in the foreground.

A tall bookcase opposite was filled, the top shelf with clean unused lesson-books, the rest with children's picture-books, while ostentatiously in front lay Master Val's first and only copy-book, covered with blots, and wherein her ladyship had persuaded her darling to scrawl three very questionable pothooks.

A bright fire roaring up the chimney, shedding its friendly light on the neighboring chairs and throwing up the colors in the thick carpet, completed a very comfortable picture.

Nellie knelt on the soft hearthrug to warm her hands at the cheerful blaze, and her thoughts had just flown back across the sea, when the door opened, and Flora looked in.

"Is Val here? No? How cosy it looks in here!" she said, as she trailed her long dressing-gown over the floor and sank into the most easy chair in the room. "Have you had breakfast?"

"Yes: Val and I had it nearly an hour ago."

"Oh," said Flora, with a yawn, "then he won't come bothering down at present! So I think I'll stay here a little; my room is smoking dreadfully, or I should go straight to bed.

"I never can sleep comfortably in a train: indeed, I can't tell why we travel by night; but it is one of papa's stupid ideas!"

"I like it," replied Nellie. "I like rushing through the darkness."

"Do you?" said Flora, fixing her cold light—blue eyes upon Nellie's fair young face.

"I suppose you are not accustomed to travel?" she added, looking her companion over from her little shoes to her bright curly head.

"No," answered Nellie, laughing. "I have never been out of Ireland before."

"Good gracious!" cried Flora. "I hope you don't mean to teach the child Irish! His nurse is Scotch, and it would be a dreadful mixture!"

Nellie laughed again.

She had seen enough of Flora since she had been with the family to know that, for some reason or other, the young lady did not like her, and would take any means to put her in the wrong or make her uncomfortable.

Nell's quick Irish wit soon taught her that to laugh or to take no notice of Flora's unkind and often rude remarks was the best way to discourage them.

"I hope, now that mamma has engaged you for Val, you will keep him in here as much as possible, and, when he leaves you, send him into the nursery; I can't have him always tumbling over our feet, as he has done lately.

"Mamma is much happier without him, if she only knew it; and in a week or two the house will be full for Christmas, and then he must positively stay with you. You understand me, Miss O'What's-your-name?"

"Perfectly, Miss Hildyard," replied Nellie. "And allow me to suggest to you that my name is O'Ferra, and I am very proud of the fact."

"Indeed!" said Flora, eyeing her suspiciously. "When we were staying at the O'Donoghues', we drove over to a tumble-down old place called Castle O'Ferra, to see some pheasants that my friends thought of buying.

"They said the owner was dead, and that his son had to let off all the land and shut up the house."

"You went there?" cried Nellie, the blood rushing into her cheeks and her eyes shining like stars.

"It is my own home. Ah"—clasping her hands—"how miserable I am to have left it! How did it look? Did your friends take any golden pheasants?"

"I don't know," drawled Flora. "Why does your brother let the place go to pieces like that?"

"He can't help it," replied Nellie, with deepening color. "The creditors will have it for years."

"Oh! How old are you?" was the next question.

"About your age, I fancy," replied Nellie, a smile gathering round the corners of her mouth.

"That is really no answer, Miss O'Ferra"—the Castle seemed to fix the name in Flora's mind.

"I hope you are competent to teach the child manners," she added; "I wanted him to have a Frenchwoman."

Nellie's only answer was another slight laugh, as she drew her chair near to the fire and took up an old picture-book to shield her face.

Flora continued, after a moment's pause—

"Pity you have to be a governess, as, of course, you have no chance of mixing in society and marrying—and really pretty, but rather washed out; are you not?—if you don't mind my saying so."

"Very likely I am," replied Nellie. "I never thought about it before."

But at this moment the door opened, and Master Val entered, cutting short the acrimonious remarks of his sister.

"What are you doing here, Flora?" he asked, standing in the middle of the room a frown puckering up his small face. "Go away; this is my room, and Nellie's."

"I certainly shall go, now you have come," said Flora; and it was evident from her expression that much sisterly love was not wasted on Val.

"Please to remember my remarks about a certain person, Miss O'Ferra;" and, with a yawn, Flora rose and swept away.

CHAPTER III.

NELLIE soon found her task in regard to her little charge an easy one.

It did not matter in the least, Lady Hildyard would say, whether he learnt his lessons or not, as he was still so very young.

Nothing mattered if the darling were happy.

As for Sir Wilton, he was quite a cipher in the bosom of his family.

He took a great fancy to Nellie, who would listen to his old tales over and over again, and never snubbed him as his daughter did.

So he soon fell into the way of dropping in at the study every morning to see if Val and Nellie could come out with him for a walk.

He asked Nellie one day if she could ride.

And, finding she was fond of it, he used to take them out, Val on his pony and Nellie on a tall chestnut horse.

He even hinted at the pleasures of hunting.

But, although the very idea sent the blood tingling through her veins, she felt that was not to be.

She heard afterwards that he had mildly suggested that, as Miss O'Ferra was accustomed to going across country, he should like to take her out some day.

Flora assured him that she could not think of such a thing.

"You can take me out, papa; but you shall not take the governess."

Lady Hildyard was, somewhat like her husband, kind when Flora's sharp eyes were not on her.

The parents had been the slaves of their daughter until, after many years, Flora's nose had been put out of joint by the birth of a son.

And, as Val grew older, the unfortunate parents found it hard work to please both their children.

In their hearts they clung to Val, for he was a warm-hearted lovable little fellow, and Flora was cold and calculating.

Flora was Nellie's greatest trouble, for she seemed to take a vicious pleasure in making her life as uncomfortable as possible

Instinctively Nellie knew, if her ladyship were at all cold in her manner, or Sir Wilton remarkably quiet, that Flora had been making them "sit up."

The fact was Flora was jealous of Nellie, whose beautiful proud face was a perpetual annoyance to her, and her one idea was to keep the governess as much as possible in the background.

But Val refused to move without Nellie, and Sir Wilton was always contriving excuses for having the pair with him.

It was a dull afternoon, about a week or two before Christmas, when Nellie, having romped with Val in the nursery till she was tired, went into her own room, and, wrapping herself in her sealskin coat, seated herself in the deep recess of the window.

"It is not so very cold," she thought, "and I want to see the people come. Let me see—who did Sir Wilton say was coming to-day?

"Teddie and his friends, I suppose. I am glad he is coming, for somehow I like him! I don't think he looks either good or clever; but—I like him."

She never acknowledged, even to herself how she had looked forward to the arrival of Teddie, with whose history Val, as far as he knew it, had taken good care she should be intimately acquainted.

The carriage, she knew, had been sent to the station more than an hour ago, and she now sat watching for its return, with the hope that the hero of most of her little playfellow's stories would return with it.

Here it was!

The noble pair of grays, making no account of the rise in the park near the house dashed up to the hall door in their best style, the coachman and footman both blue in the face from meeting the biting north wind for the last hour.

Nellie bent forward as the occupants of the carriage stepped out into the glow the blazing wood-fire in the hall threw on the frozen white ground.

To her annoyance a strange man with a dark moustache and a little lady smothered in furs emerged from the carriage and entered the house.

"The Seymour-Brookes, I suppose," she murmured — "otherwise 'Mr. and Mrs. Dick.'"

The carriage drove away, and all was quiet again.

Nellie sat on in the gathering dusk some time longer, then rose and lighted her lamp to make her toilet for study-tea.

When she turned to the window again to close the heavy blind, she took a last look down the long drive.

"Ah, there's a light coming up the avenue! Who is coming now? Only one carriage was sent out, I know."

The big lamp over the door shed its rays far over the terrace, and, as the cab—for so it was—drew up, and an ulster-clad figure got out and gave the bell a violent pull, Nellie knew who it was.

Two more men, also much be-ulstered followed, and the next moment a murmur of greeting became audible below.

But before this Mr. Galbraith—for it was he—had cast a rapid glance over the front of the house, and Nellie felt that his eye rested on her illuminated window as she was intently gazing out.

"Disgusting!" she cried, with an angry little stamp.

"Why did he look up?"—and, blushing with vexation, she tugged manfully at the shutters.

They closed at length rather noisily; and then she became aware of a pair of small fists battering at her door.

"Nellie, Nellie, come to tea! I am so hungry, and Teddie's come, and a big ugly man who does talk in such an awful funny way!"

"All right, Val," answered Nellie, opening the door and looking cautiously round. "There's no one about; so let's have a race downstairs.

"You shall have a start as far as the top, only mind you go quietly. One—two—three—and away!"—and off went Val.

Nellie gathered up the train of her long dress and flew after him—along the corridor, down the stairs, and straight into the arms of—a young man who was standing at the foot.

"I beg your pardon!" he exclaimed.

"It was my fault," returned Nellie, who had started back. "I was having a race with my little pupil.

"I trust you are not hurt," she added, with a saucy smile, giving a quick glance at her companion, a good-looking fair-haired young fellow with a light moustache.

"Not much," he said, looking with admiration at her flushed face.

Nellie bowed slightly and passed on.

At the end of the hall was Sir Wilton, talking to a tall man, while, leaning his broad shoulders against the high mantelpiece, stood Teddie, smoking like a Sheffield chimney.

She had meditated stealing quietly on to the study, which Val had already gained; but young Galbraith, as soon as he caught sight of her, threw away his cigar and came forward to intercept her retreat.

"You seem in a hurry, Miss O'Ferra," he said, holding out his hand, which Nellie, after a moment's pause, touched lightly for a second with her soft fingers.

"Yes, I am rather," she replied sedately. "My little pupil does not like to be kept waiting."

"Oh, Val! By-the-by, I promised to go and see him the first thing; but I—I'm not quite sure where the schoolroom is; if you are going that way, would you show me?"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

The Ballet Girl.

BY BLAKE PAXSON.

THE superb theatre of San Carlos, at Naples, was built by the architect Fontana, for Charles III., the Spanish Bourbon, who founded the kingdom of the two Sicilies.

Fontana received the king on the opening night, and his majesty expressed himself delighted with the royal box and the splendor of the house generally, but he said, since the the theatre was so near to the palace, nearly touching it, he was sorry that the architect had not thought of connecting the two buildings by a passage-way, so that he could attend the opera without the trouble of riding to and fro in his carriage.

This was the only criticism which he had to make upon the plan, and Fontana admitted its justice.

When the curtain fell that night upon a long opera and ballet, the architect again presented himself at the door of the royal box, and bowing low to the king, said—

"Sire, your majesty will not be obliged to get into your carriage again. You can return to the palace without entering the street."

And so it was, for the architect had collected a legion of workmen, and in the space of four or five hours, had pierced walls, erected a drawbridge, carpeted and draped the way with splendid tapestry, and thus completed a magnificent connection between the palace and the opera house.

Delighted at this result the king exclaimed that it was a miracle, but it was only the old story.

The San Carlos, next to the San Carlos at Milan, is probably the largest opera-house ever constructed.

Its elegant architectural effect, embracing six tiers of boxes, its vast auditorium, decorated in gilt, and brilliantly illuminated in all parts, the gay and diaphanous costumes of the dark-eyed and beautiful women, the expressive gesticulation and volubility of the audience between the acts, the superb stage appointments, all serve to form a picture of dazzling beauty, hardly to be surpassed, if it can be equalled, even in Paris, that gayest of the European capitals.

We had been witnessing the ever-popular opera of "Faust," at the San Carlos, one January evening, delighted by the manner of its rendering, and especially with the fine music of Gounod, as performed by an orchestra of a hundred pieces, with an able chorus of as many more upon the stage.

According to the French and Italian custom, the opera was sandwiched, so to speak, by the introduction of the ballet between the acts, and it is to this part of the performance that we are indebted for introducing us to the characters described in this veritable story.

As is universally the case, the premiere danseuse was supported by four or five "seconds," as they are called, selected from the corps de ballet as being the next best dancers to herself.

Of the four who held this position at the San Carlos that evening we had noted one especially who was the most graceful and the prettiest of the group, and to whose care was entrusted a very difficult and trying part of the performance.

However, she had succeeded in accomplishing it to the great satisfaction of the enthusiastic audience, and she was just about to retire amid their plaudits, when she seemed to trip, and in recovering herself, to strain or sprain her ankle, so as to nearly faint upon the stage, and to require to be carried from before the audience in the arms of the prompter, who came at once to her relief.

As we passed out of the theatre at the close of the performance, arm-in-arm with a plethoric and somewhat eccentric friend, we found the way barred for a moment by a sedan-chair, into which the good-natured prompter was lifting the young girl who had injured her foot.

We stopped, for the purpose of seeing the men lift the conveyance and start off, when the prompter, observing our apparent interest, turned toward us and said in a low tone—

"It is too bad. She's a good girl, too poor to lose a single night by being laid up, but it can't be helped."

"Poor girl, can't afford it, eh? What does the fellow say?" asked my companion in his jerky fashion.

"He says that the danseuse we saw trip and hurt herself, is a poor girl and can't afford to lose her engagement," I replied to my friend.

"Well, well, she must be looked after. Don't you understand?"

"Yes, it's very easy to say she must be looked after; but who's to do it, that's the question?"

"I'll do it. Anything to say against it?" asked my eccentric companion, as though he wished some one would dare to dispute with him upon the subject.

"I'll get her name and address, if you wish it."

"Wish it, wish it, of course I do."

The prompter, being consulted, gave us Amalia Gotte's address, and reiterating what he had already told us, said he was extremely glad that anyone should take an interest in the girl.

My companion took the address and put it in his pocket-book.

As we walked to our hotel he declared that he would see about it on the next day.

"I'll see about it—yes, to-morrow."

The revelance of my friend's ejaculatory queries, with which he so profusely interlarded his remarks, was not always manifest, but then Frank Barnard was a man weighing over two hundred pounds, though not more than five feet seven inches in height, and his heart was as large in proportion as his body.

He indulged in charities that would have impoverished most of his friends, but his fortune was ample, and himself an old bachelor of fifty-five, without any near relatives.

"Amalia Gotte, eh! Pretty name that," said my friend, taking out the card given him by the prompter.

"Suits her to a charm," I replied enthusiastically.

"Eh? Well, she is pretty, that's a fact," and the generous old fellow took his candle and went off to bed.

On the following day we together sought the home of the danseuse.

We found her with her limb bandaged and raised upon a chair, but her fingers busy with a very delicate piece of embroidery.

An aged woman was engaged about the humble quarters in domestic duty, who we soon learned was her mother.

Properly introducing ourselves, and using the good-natured prompter's name, we were soon quite at home.

By degrees we elicited from Amalia her interesting story.

She had been brought up by her mother in this humble abode, with her cousin Giovanni, but he, alas, was now in the prison.

"Prison, prison, eh? What is he in prison for?" asked my friend, all excitement in a moment.

And so it appeared that he had been fined by the court for assaulting a noted libertine, a titled scoundrel, who was insulting Amalia, a few months since, and in default of payment had been sent to prison, from whence to effect his release, the ballet girl was working night and day to earn a few scudi.

"And now, alas," said the poor girl, "this accident will throw me back, and poor Giovanni will have to remain another month in prison."

"No, he won't. How much is his fine, eh?" asked Frank Barnard, very excitedly indeed.

"Forty scudi," said Amalia, with a sigh, "and I have already got nearly thirty towards it."

"Forty, eh? Will they release your cousin if the forty scudi are paid?" asked Frank Barnard.

"Oh, yes. He was only imprisoned because he could not pay the fine," she answered, "and it's so much money."

"Young girl—Signorina Amalia—your cousin shall be with you in half an hour. Come," said he to me, "come along to the court-house. We'll try to buy some justice."

It appeared that Giovanni and Amalia had been brought up together from infancy by the old lady we had met, and that the boy was her only sister's child, that sister having died in his babyhood.

The two children had grown up to love each other, and it was already agreed that at the proper time they were to be married.

Both had found occupation at the San Carlos theatre, she as a danseuse, and he in the mechanical department of the stage business.

The three, without other living kindred, had together formed a happy, though poor and humble household, until Giovanni had got into the present difficulty by defending his cousin.

My companion counted out the gold, and received the proper papers of release in behalf of Amalia's cousin, and driving to the prison demanded his discharge immediately.

The order of the court was all potent, and taking the handsome young fellow into our carriage, we drove off to his home, where he was soon embracing the mother and daughter, and expressing his gratitude to his deliverer.

Amalia, though very happy, could not but sigh at her accident.

"Hey—misfortune? Not a bit of it! How should we have known about you unless you had sprained your ankle?"

"Ah! that is true," replied the bewitchingly pretty girl, while just the smallest tear of joy wet her cheek.

"What can I say to thank you?" asked the young Italian.

"Say," said my friend; "say that you will give any fellow who insults your cousin a sound thrashing."

"You may rely upon me for that, sir," was his manly reply.

"Signora," said my friend to the mother, "keep this purse until the wedding day, and then buy Amalia some of the proper things for her to wear. And as to you, my pretty child," he said, addressing the young ballet girl, "remember that what you call misfortunes are sometimes blessings in disguise."

RULES FOR SPOILING PUPILS.—1. Be suspicious of all their motives. 2. When fighting occurs among your pupils, punish all engaged in it with equal severity—the timid boy who was forced into it in self-defence as severely as the lubberly schoolyard bully who picked a fight for the avowed purpose of whipping him. 3. Never seem to believe a pupil unless you know his statements to be true. Regard all as liars, and you will soon succeed in making many of them so. 4. When requests are sent you from parents, no matter how reasonable they may be, don't grant them if you can avoid it. Give the children to understand that for good and sufficient reasons you have suspended the old Jewish rule—"Honor thy father and mother." Nothing adds so much to your importance in the eyes of your school as to be able to disregard the wishes of their parents. 5. Be constantly on the watch to find something in your pupils' personal peculiarities that you can ridicule. You can well afford to wound the feelings of a child in this way for the sake of the boisterous laugh it will cause among the others.

Scientific and Useful.

FAT.—Obesity if often constitutional, but it may be reduced by good exercise, abstemiousness, the avoidance of much farinaceous and glutinous food, early rising, and the refraining from all indolent habits.

WALNUT POLISH.—A good polish for walnut wood is to mix two parts of good alcoholic shellac varnish with one part of good boiled linseed oil, and apply with a pad formed of woolen cloth. Rub briskly till the polish appears, using only a little at a time.

SICK CHAMBERS.—In sick rooms where there is diphtheria, measles, scarlet fever, etc., the air should be impregnated with the odor of equal parts of turpentine and carbolic acid. Half a teaspoonful in a kettle of boiling water from time to time will be found to relieve the sufferer and prevent the spread of the malady.

PURE BLACK.—A pure black upon wood may be produced by the application of the following mixture: Pour four quarts of water over an ounce of powdered extract of log-wood and, when the solution is effected, add a dram of yellow chromate of potassium and stir the whole well. It may require several applications of the mixture.

BELTS AND PULLEYS.—Experience shows that the plan of adding to the transmitting power of belts by applying to them oil, resin or some adhesive substance, and by tightening them on the pulleys, is a disadvantage. The use of oil, resin, etc., results in a direct waste of power, for, as it gets gummy as it gets old, the belt sticks to the pulley, requiring considerable power to separate it, and in time neutralizing all the advantage sought to be gained by its use.

PAPER BOTTLES.—Paper bottles are now made on a large scale in Germany and Austria. The paper must be well sized. The following is said to be a good recipe for the paper: Ten parts of rags, forty of straw, fifty of brown wood pulp. The paper is impregnated or coated on both sides with sixty parts of defibrinated fresh blood, thirty-five parts of lime powder, five parts of sulphate of alumina. After drying, ten or twelve rolled leaves are coated again, pieced over each other, and then placed in heated molds. The albumen in the blood forms a combination on pressure with the lime which is perfectly proof against spirits, etc. The bottles are made in two parts, which are joined afterward.

Farm and Garden.

TAR.—A dash of tar on the noses of sheep is an effective preventive against the attacks of annoying grubs. The sheep grub is not always fatal, but very disagreeable, and doubtless has a bad effect on the general health of the animal.

SALT AND WHEAT.—One of the advantages of sowing salt on wheat is that it partially prevents freezing of the soil, thereby obviating the dislodging of the plants by upheaval, as a lower temperature is required to freeze ground that has been salted than that not salted.

CORN.—A method of preparing corn for hogs is to soak it. The soaking causes the corn to undergo more or less fermentation, and it acquires a peculiar sweetness from the conversion of a portion of the starch into glucose. Soaked corn is better assimilated than when fed in a dry state.

THEIR VALUE.—The directors of the Iowa Agricultural College value, comparatively, milk-producing foods as follows: Corn, per one hundred pounds, fifty cents; oats, sixty cents; barley, fifty-five cents; wheat, sixty-five cents; bran, seventy cents; oil-meal, one dollar and forty-five cents.

PRUNING.—It is claimed by an experienced horticulturist that that there is nothing equal to the little and often system of pruning, or rather pinching. The soft young shoots can be easily removed by the finger and thumb, and the pruning, instead of being confined to a single period, extends throughout the whole season, or whenever a shoot is noticed that demands pruning.

POULTRY.—Poultry breeders must not lose sight of the double object of raising poultry—the production of eggs and the production of the supply of carcase. Without entering into the merits of either as a preference, it will be well to bear in mind that certain breeds are essentially table birds, and put on flesh in a shorter period than the others, and consequently whether eggs are desired or carcasses, particular breeds should be used for the purpose intended.

IMPROVED BREEDS.—Whenever a practical test of different animals is made in feeding it is sure to demonstrate that the employment of improved breeds secures a product of such superior quality as to command an enhanced price, and more of it in a given time, or on a given amount of suitable food. The great advantage and economy of employing improved stock would be still more apparent if pains were taken to make the feeding experiments exact and complete.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

SIXTY-FOURTH YEAR.

SATURDAY EVENING, SEPT. 20, 1884.

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—or,—

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FOGGY PEOPLE.

Fogs are not confined to the atmosphere; they are mental as well. And so the brain of our neighbor is filled with what we will call the white fog of want of method; he won't tax his memory by expecting it to furnish him with any accurate information; and so he goes through the world, annoying every one by his unbusiness-like habits, and misleading them by his unreliable information

But if brains filled with white fog are pitiful, what can we say of those whose heads seem bowls-full of pea-soup fog? They are hopelessly dense. No amount of light you throw upon a subject seems to clear their ideas concerning it.

And these are dangerous people, though you may not at first think so. A yellow fog is dangerous because when men cannot see their way clearly they run up against every lamp-post, and tumble into every ditch in the neighborhood.

And a foggy-minded man leads others wrong besides getting into trouble himself. Every one who knocks his head or breaks his leg through ignorant actions, does harm to the public.

He obliges the public to sit up with him at night attending to his bandages; he deprives the public of his useful work whilst he is ill, at the same time helping to use up the supply of skill, patience, and property which are at the disposal of the public to a very limited extent, and urgently wanted for those whom sheer misfortune, and not curable blindness, have brought into difficulties.

Now, a man who thinks thickly, should be shown his follies if possible; and if he is too dense to be enlightened, the public should get out of his way as soon as possible, and as far as possible.

Last of all, there are the black fogs and the black fog people. They are to be studied carefully. They are as dangerous as dynamite. They deprive you of your power of sight altogether.

They make sun, stars, electric lights, and all illuminating objects useless, because they put such an atmosphere between you and the light as makes your eyes useless to you, and useless to everyone else.

With the most benevolent heart, you may in one day, if you rush about headlong and heedless in a black fog, do immense injury to numbers of your fellow creatures.

And black-fog folk, with excellent intentions, are injuring heaps of their fellow countrymen, because they are putting their black, nonsensical ideas between their minds' eyes and the true light of nature, science and religion.

These are the mob orators, who make men think a little display of banners, or bullets, or brag, or bravado, will get them all they want, whether that all is just or unjust, good for the whole community, or good only for themselves.

They speak the truth as they understand it, but we know that many falsehoods have called themselves by the name of truth in every age.

And worst of all black-fog people are those who want people to believe life is not worth living.

They have clouded up their own hearts with evil, black thoughts about the world and all the people in it, and they want to make others as dark and wretched as themselves.

Just as a fog distorts the appearance and shape of many objects, so these people misrepresent God and the world, and society, till they make people believe their caricatures are true portraits.

Have nothing to do with such people. Why should we be brought out of the sunshine into their black fog? Let them keep their bogies to themselves.

We mean to be bright-faced, light-hearted, clear-seeing people, who go on our way happily, and help to make the world as cheery a place to live in as it was meant to be.

SANCTUM CHAT.

It is intended to establish cremation furnaces in several of the larger cemeteries of Paris, and to cremate all persons whose remains are not claimed by their friends. Should the experiment prove successful, the government will probably introduce a general bill on the subject, in the chamber.

—

"Englishmen at home are gradually getting rid of the tee system," says a London paper; and it adds: "It has been abolished at the best theatres, and, though it may be years before we shall attain the common sense and simplicity of the American principle, yet even at our hotels there are signs of great improvement."

—

When properly regulated, a varied course of gymnastics is anything but prejudicial to the growing frame of a well-formed and healthy girl; but, as in all other kinds of violent exercise—such as rowing and tennis—it must be kept under restraint, the great fault being that girls are apt to over-exert themselves, and thus not only fail to reap any advantage, but do themselves serious and perhaps permanent injury.

—

The more civilized nations of the world may take a lesson from the Turks. In that country everybody, no matter what his station may be, is trained in one art or handicraft at least. The late unfortunate Sultan selected the scribe's vocation. Specimens of his caligraphy, in which the Turks are real connoisseurs, are at present to be seen and purchased in an exhibition held in the courtyard of the mosque of the Sultan Bayazid.

—

In Massachusetts women and children are driving men out of many industries. The trades in which the former are a very large majority are awnings and tents, buttons, dress trimmings, carpetings, clothing, cotton goods, woolens, fancy goods, flax and linen, hair work, hose, rubber, mixed textiles, paper, silks, sporting goods, straw goods and worsteds—twenty in all. Sixty trades show a preponderance of men. As late as 1840 there were but seven vocations into which New England women had entered. Now the number is 317.

—

There is a man around New York with a new scheme. He proposes a subterfuge by which men on limited salaries can keep up appearances to some extent. He makes a pool on a summer hat, for instance. Four men put in fifty cents each and buy a $2 hat. Each man is entitled to wear this hat one night in four. On this night he comes up on the principal streets or at the theatre. On the other nights he skulks down back alleys with the old hat, or remains at home. The same combination is proposed on other articles of apparel, and it seems to offer pleasing inducements to a number.

—

Complaint is made that early marriages are becoming common among the boys and girls in the east end of London. Boys and girls of 12 "keep company," and at 14 or 15 every laddie has his lassie. In a single district a boy of sixteen recently married a girl of the same age. In a printing office in the same district there are four married boys. The eldest is only 19, and receives $3.50 a week; the next is 18, has three years of his apprenticeship still to serve, and has two children; the youngest is 16, and has to keep a wife and child on $3.50 a week. Another boy is known whose age is between 16 or 17, and he has two children. Still another boy of 16 has one child.

—

Every action, with its natural consequences, forms a whole which cannot be broken. Emerson says on this point: Justice is not postponed; a perfect equity adjusts its balance in all parts of life. Every secret is told, every crime is punished, every virtue rewarded, every wrong redressed, in silence and certainty. What we call retribution is the universal necessity by which the whole appears whenever a part appears. If you see smoke, there must be fire. Every act rewards itself, or, in other words, integrates itself. Crime and punishment grow out of one stem. Punishment is a fruit that, unsuspected, ripens with the flower of the pleasure which concealed it. Cause and effect, means and end, seed and fruit, cannot be severed, for the effect already blooms in the cause, the end pre-exists in the means, the fruit in the seed.

—

The authorities of France have taken up the question of the health of school children. A commission on the subject was appointed recently, and its report is now before the Minister of Education. In it there are some remarks about cleanliness that were to be expected as a matter of course, and some conclusions about costume that are rather surprising. It seems that French children generally, and especially children of the very poor, are dressed much too warmly. In the school rooms they wear nearly all the outer garments and wraps which they wear out of doors. The report recommends the abolition by law of this senseless custom, and the substitution of a light headdress for girls instead of the heavy and cumbrous bonnet which they now wear. The report closes by highly commending the English custom of allowing children to run about barelegged and oftentimes bareheaded.

—

Have you ever met the sarcastic young woman? No! Well, she is a pest. The giddy girl, the gushing girl, and the lackadaisical miss are not ornaments whose loss would cause the world grief, but they can be tolerated. The sarcastic maiden should be suppressed by law. The school is growing. Nobody likes the sarcastic girl; everybody fears, and many hate her. Her stock-in-trade may originally have been satire, but has long ago degenerated into impudence, and with the degeneration has slipped her ability to see the difference between what was and what is—between satire and impudence. She has been fostered in the family circle and generally stays there. She began with mild criticisms of her friends, and ends by lampooning them. Now she has none, and caricatures her acquaintances. Her parents applauded her early efforts, and she retaliates by staying on their hands. The family think her brilliant, young men avoid her, and what the world knows as a sour old maid is generally thus created.

—

A prominent London periodical, in discussing the whisker philosophically, politically, and socially, thus indulges: "The mutton-chop seems to have suggested the form of a substantial British whisker. Out of this simple form countless varieties have arisen; one has whiskers turned into the corners of his mouth, as if he were holding them up with his teeth, the second has wandered into the middle of the cheek, and there stopped, as though it did not know where to go, like a youth who has ventured out into the middle of a ball-room with all eyes upon him; another twists the contrary way, under the owner's ears; another, with a vast Pacific of a face, has little whiskers, which seem to have stopped short after two inches of voyage, as though aghast at the prospect of having to turn such a Cape Horn of a chin. We perceive coming a tremendous pair, running over the shirt-collar, in luxurious profusion; yet we see, as the colonel or general takes off his hat to a lady, that he is quite bald—those whiskers, in fact, are nothing but a tremendous landslip from the veteran's head."

—

Grief and Joy, Hope and Fear, Tears and Smiles, Pain and Pleasure, are all twins—children of the same mother, and linked together throughout the whole world of humanity. No lot, no country, no climate, no scene, no condition may claim the enjoyment of one, without the rebuking companionship of the other. No cloud, however, is without its inner light. The blue sky still harbors behind the gloomy canopy, ready with its sunshine, and keeping the sad soul from being entirely delivered to despair. No condition is so lowly as to be without its hope; no sorrow so poignant and oppressive, as not to permit the consolation of some sweet minister, interposing at the right moment, with compensation and perhaps delight. There is no such thing as unmitigated evil; as there is no such thing as pleasure and joy, without cloud or qualification. We have only to open our hearts to the smile and the sunshine; not turn our backs, or shut our eyes to the angelic visitor, who is always sure to stand upon the threshold, whenever we deserve most need and are willing to give him welcome.

—

A curious article might be written on the immunity from wounds in action of some generals, and the ill-fortune of others in becoming the billet for a bullet. No commander was ever more forward in the fighting line than Sheridan, yet he never got a scratch. Skobeleff, who many a time went at it with his own good sword, and in his white coat and on his white charger headed every charge with a recklessness that men called madness, had as complete immunity as if he carried the charmed life that his soldiers ascribed, and was wounded only in the quiet trenches by a chance bullet fired into the air miles away. Wellington was but once hit. The bullet that carried away his boot heel scarce gave him a contusion. Grant was never struck; no more was Napoleon. Of Sir Neville Chamberlain, one of the most distinguished officers of the Indian army, the saying goes that he never went into action without receiving a wound, and the gallant old man has been fighting pretty steadily ever since the first Afghan war. Bazaine was a man to whom fortune was not stingy in the matter of wounds. At Borny there came to him the leaden reminder that he was mortal, though this time it was into nearly as great a sham as itself.

—

If we were asked, says a New Yorker, what is to-day the great advantage which man has over woman in the struggle for existence, we should answer, without hesitation, pockets. Pockets are the symbol of an orderly mind, of logical powers, practical acquirements, homogeneity. A bag—a woman's bag, a shopping bag—is the emblem of the kingdom of misrule. Speaking roundly, a man's clothes contain a dozen pockets. In this convenient place his change is kept ever ready, and never in the way; in that receptacle are his knife, corkscrew, and shoe-buttoner; another compartment is sacred to his purse, still another holds his handkerchief; his gloves may have a separate home if he will; his eye-glass lives in an aristocratic seclusion; watch, pencil-case and toothpicks are comfortably segregated, and he has room besides for memorandum book, letters, newspapers, the new magazines, visiting cards and a case of court plaster. Is it any wonder that he turns the key of the world's great lock easily and well, having both hands free to that exercise? And the fact that he has conquered his pockets, so to speak, testifies to the supremacy of man. If his tailor demurred at putting them in, that useful minion would find his occupation gone. But when woman is told by her dressmaker that only one inaccessible pocket is to be allowed her, she supinely submits, and thereby proclaims her inferiority of sex.

YOUTH AND TIME.

BY I. D. C.

I woke one day to find that Youth was going,
With Time, who takes good things and ill,
To join a vague procession, ever growing,
Of ghosts who people dreamland still:
Those whom the years have rent world-wide asunder,
Old friends once daily looked upon;
Some toil upon the earth, and some rest under,
No doubt; and do some still regret, I wonder,
The glad old days, the good time gone?

Time rakes away his dust-heap of dead roses
Of empty cups, of broken vows,
Spent love; and all dim memory discloses,
The morning after Youth's carouse;
He shows us shades of unforgotten faces,
We hear the voices far away,
Of revellers, who leave us still some traces
Of songs whose echoes haunt old halting-places,
Where night was often turned to day.

And many rest in sleep by dreams unbroken,
By winds unswept, by stars unseen,
Never to speak again as they have spoken,
Or know lost joys that might have been.
When slow departing Summer day yet lingers,
Between the purpling Western bars,
When winds sound faint, as if some far-off singers
Were touching harps with tired, trembling fingers,
We see lost eyes smile in the stars.

Betty.

BY E. F. SPENCER.

A DAY—July 10th, 1847.

It was a brilliant morning.

The July sun shone down over the peaceful little village of Rest, and the parson thereof was standing on the well-kept gravelled path just outside the Rectory door.

He was reading a letter—a pleasant one, I fancy; for there was a smile on his face, which lingered there even after he had folded it up and replaced it in its envelope; it deepened yet more as the gate was pushed open, and a tall, straight, well-set-up boy of fourteen or fifteen years old came towards him.

This boy was young Tom Adair, the Squire of Rest.

"Well, Tom," said the jovial pastor genially, "you're early this morning. Come to breakfast, eh?"

Tom Adair laughed.

"Yes, if Mrs. Trevor asks me," he replied, with a schoolboy tip of his hat; "but I didn't come for that, but to bring Betty a present for her birthday."

"Go inside, then," said Mr. Trevor laughing. "You'll find Betty raving over the offerings that have already turned up."

Thus bidden, the lad went into the house turning, with the accustomed manner of one who knew the place and was not wont to stand on ceremony, into a large and very cheerful room near the principal door of entrance.

"Betty," said he.

At the sound of his voice a child turned from the table at which she was standing—a very fair and lovely child, surely just such a one as caused the exclamation from Gregory the Great more than thirteen hundred years ago, "*Angeli, non Angli*"—a very dainty, fairy-like, and fragile child, with hair like spun gold, eyes blue and bright as the blue heavens, in which at that moment the sun shone like a diamond in a bed of sapphires; a child with a face that would have been perfectly regular in feature, had not the nose had the smallest little upward turn.

Her eyebrows and lashes were brown, her skin very clear and smooth, and fine as ivory, white as porcelain, and with the faintest dash of apple-blossom pink across the cheeks.

She turned from the table to meet him.

"Oh, Tom," she said eagerly, "I was just wishing for you this moment. I've got such a lot of presents. Look here! Grandpapa has sent me a watch—a real one; look at it! See, this is the key—that's gold, too. And Aunt Mary has sent me a chain; she hopes I will take care of it, for it was granny's.

"Father has given me a sovereign—a whole sovereign, Tom, a new one; mother a chain for my locket; Uncle Bob, five saillings, because he didn't know what to buy; Uncle Jack, a colley-pup; and Uncle Geoff, a writing-case, all fitted up, seal and wax and everything—isn't it a beauty, though? And Aunt Joan has sent me—a doll!"

Tom burst out laughing.

"What, hasn't she made a change yet? I vote we have a little fun out of the old thing this time. Let's have an execution," he suggested; "it will be no end of a lark. She must have meant it for that—Miss Joan I mean; she couldn't expect you to play with it"—in tones of contempt quite as profound as Betty's.

Mrs. Trevor laughed indulgently.

"Ah, poor Aunt Joan! It is well she does not know what a hoyden her only niece is—a hoyden who utterly despises dolls, and prefers climbing walls and trees to setting her doll's house in order," she said, smoothing Betty's golden hair caressingly.

"She knows I hate dolls," broke in Betty indignantly.

"What with your daddy's spoiling, and what with your having no friend but Tom, I am afraid Betty you have grown up in what your Aunt Joan calls a shocking manner."

"Then what would she approve of?" Tom asked, really by way of gaining information; for he happened never to have seen Miss Joan Bowers.

Mrs. Trevor laughed again.

"A nice, meek, well-behaved little damsel, who would never object to sew her seam diligently, but be industrious and careful, and play decorously with her doll afterwards; who would never make a noise, keep all her drawers in perfect order, all her toys unbroken, know her Catechism thoroughly, never have a dirty face, never tear her frock——"

There Mrs. Trevor's enumeration came to an end, put to a violent death by Betty's two soft arms flung round her neck.

"Dear mammie, you wouldn't like me to be such a mean little sneak, would you, now?" she cried. "Why, I believe you would just hate me!"

"I believe I should—I'm sure your daddy would," the mother answered. "And now, my chickie, let me go; I want to pour out the coffee. Tom, my dear, have you come to breakfast?"

"I will have some, please, Mrs. Trevor," Tom answered; "though I really came to bring Betty a birthday present; only she has got so very many that I——"

"Show me," interrupted Betty imperatively; "show me this very minute, dear darling Tom!"

Thus encouraged, Tom produced from his jacket-pocket a little box, which, on being opened, was found to contain a small cross of gold some two inches in length, and richly chased on one side; on the reverse, which was plain, was engraved, "Tom to Betty, July 10th, 1847."

Betty held the trinket at arm's length, and, having rapturously admired it, rushed up to the lad, and flung her arms about his neck, in all the abandonment of sweet childhood.

"I love you, Tom—you are a darling!" she cried, holding up her mouth to be kissed.

Young Tom just brushed his cheek against hers for an instant, reddening a little—for he had the true masculine horror of a scene; then, with a breath of decided relief, pushed her gently towards the table, and drew a chair near for himself.

"I will always wear it," said Betty, still regarding the cross. "I will wear it on my chain; I love it!"

Very soon, however, her thoughts reverted to the doll.

It was a gift which repeated itself twice each year—on her birthday and at Christmas—a gift which, with each renewal, seemed to come more and more in the light of a studied insult.

A doll!

As if she wanted to nurse and hug a doll—a thing of wax and sawdust, a thing with two great staring eyes that wouldn't even shut—a thing with a fixed and stupid grin on its stupid waxen face—a thing that had two vexatious misshapen legs stuffed with sawdust, and embellished with in-toed club-feet!

Betty was indeed indignant.

Her Uncle Jack's present of a colley-pup was a present worth having; her Uncle Bob's five shillings a sensible way of remembering her birthday; her Uncle Geoff's writing-desk a possession to be proud of; her watch and chains and gold cross—why, they were all quite grown-up young lady presents.

But this—this doll! as Betty witheringly called it—it was simply too contemptible to consider in the light of a birthday present at all; in fact, it made her very angry indeed.

"What shall we do with her, Tom?" she asked, as she ate the last spoonful of her egg, and nodding towards the doll to show that she was speaking of it. "Let's hang her."

"Or shoot her," suggested Tom. "We could do William Tell beautifully—stick a ripe gooseberry on her head, with a pin through it, for the apple."

"Or suppose we burn her for a witch," cried Betty—she had just been reading an interesting episode in history describing that process—"it would be splendid! How she would melt! I shouldn't wonder if she did not fizz!"

"Yes; but it would be all up with her then," Tom objected; "and we should get scarcely any fun out of her at all, for she would burn in no time. We might drown her first; they always did that with witches you know—stuck 'em in a sack, and if they sank, swore 'em innocent, and made saints of them—what do you call it, Mr. Trevor?"

"Canonised them," was the Rector's reply.

"Yes, canonised them; but if they floated," Tom went on impressively, "they burnt them for witches. Now, how would that do? She would be pretty sure to float."

"Yes; and then we might guillotine her," Betty cried excitedly. "We'll get Cookie to lend us her big chopper, and we'll have two posts and a string, and then—scurr-r, smash! down it will come! How would that do, Tom?"

From this it will be seen that Miss Betty was a young person of great powers of adaptation.

"It will do splendidly," Tom answered. "We'll hang her first, and then float her; William Tell her next, try the chopping business afterwards, and wind up with a bonfire."

"Oh, but she'd be dead," Betty objected. "I don't know, though, that that would make much matter; we should have to pretend she was alive, anyway—it's all pretence with a doll, stupid thing! Tom, do you see my cake? Cookie made it on purpose for my birthday. Isn't it lovely. But we are not going to cut it till after we have had dinner."

"Oh, gorgeous!" Tom answered, at the same time handing his cup to Mrs. Trevor to be refilled.

Then he added suddenly—

"I say, Betty, I vote that we blow her up."

"What, Cookie?" opening her blue eyes very widely at his suggestion.

"No; that beauty over there," nodding towards the doll sitting simpering on a chair.

"Like the wops'-nest?" Betty cried excitedly. "Oh, yes, do let us! We'll get old Jimmy to do it for us; he has heaps of powder. But, Tom, you'll do all the other things first, won't you? We may as well get all the fun that we can out of the old thing."

Mrs. Trevor looked across the table at the Rector in a way that made the jovial parson burst into shouts of uproarious laughter.

"The result of sister Joan's puritanical way of bringing you up," he said. "Bless the child! I wish the old cat could hear her!"

"Hush-sh, my dear!" remonstrated his wife gently.

"Daddy is quite right," remarked Betty, as she helped herself to jam, and speaking with an absurd air of wisdom, contrasting oddly with her fairy-like person—for she was small for her nine summers. "Daddy is quite right. Aunt Joan is an old cat—no mistake about it."

The copy of her father's mature tone of deliberation was so perfect that her three hearers went off into fits of laughter, the Rector's voice ringing out the loudest of them all.

"I wonder if Aunt Joan's ears are burning?" he said at last. "If only she knew Madame Dolly's fate, eh? By the bye, is it a very valuable doll, as dolls go? And what if she asks to see it, as she did the last one?"

"Oh, we can say it got broken," Betty suggested. "It won't do to say the dogs this time."

"Oh, you terrible child!" her mother cried.

"Well, after all," exclaimed the Rector rather warmly, "Joan knows very well that Betty detests dolls, and yet she persists in sending one twice every year; and I don't suppose it cost much."

"Fifteen pence ha'p'ny," remarked Betty promptly. "I saw it on the ticket—fifteen pence ha'p'ny, and not a rag on it. I wish she'd sent fifteen pence ha'p'nyworth of toffee instead."

At this matter-of-fact speech the Rector's shouts of laughter broke out anew.

And after a while the boy and girl went out, and the simpering, waxen-faced doll was in many ways put to death.

* * * * * *

A day—Ten years after.

Ten years had flitted by, and when the morning sun rose on Betty's birthday, it rose in Indian, not English skies.

Betty was Betty Trevor no longer, but Betty Adair, wife of the Squire of Rest and lieutenant of the 00th Regiment of the Line.

Her people had been not a little unwilling that she should go to India; but Tom expatiated glowingly on the folly of losing so many years of seniority by exchanging, and had moreover given a faithful promise that if he could not effect an exchange into a home regiment of cavalry as soon as he should obtain his company, he would give up the service and settle down as a country gentleman.

He had also persuaded Betty to declare she should really enjoy the short stay of a year or so, and regard it more in the light of a holiday trip than anything else.

So between them, eventually, the Rector and his wife gave way.

The young husband and wife accompanied the regiment, when it sailed off in the good ship Wellington.

For about half a year Betty's homeward letters protested that she was really enjoying her new experiences, and should never regret that part of her life which had been spent in an Indian clime.

Alas, poor Betty! Alas, poor Tom!"

When the morning of the young wife's nineteenth birthday dawned matters were going terribly hard with them, as they went that year with many—nay, most of the British residents in the great country which the English hold by the power of the sword.

In a frail bungalow, sheltered by yet more frail fortifications—two walls and gates—defences which would have proved no bar to any foe, save cowardly Orientals—besieged by hunger and thirst, by fever and cholera, by battle, murder, and sudden death, these two with others—kept a terrible and anxious watch in the midst of their enemies, hoping against hope, fighting against fearful odds, desperately putting off the evil day.

Alas, poor Betty! Alas, poor Tom!

Up to that morning, the morning of Betty's nineteenth birthday, they had hoped against hope in spite of the overwhelming numbers of their foes.

Then, all at once, Hope spread her white wings and flew away, leaving them utterly hopeless.

The gallant little garrison had come almost to the end of its strife, and the struggle was nearly over.

A well-laid mine had already blown up the miserable outer wall and gate of defence.

The worn and weary men and women within could hear the muffled tap-tap-tapping just outside the inner wall, which told them with too awful distinctness that before many hours had passed it would share the same fate, and the defenders of the garrison would be entirely at the mercy of the besiegers, who outnumbered them by at least a hundred to one.

It was a pitiable scene, a mere handful of Europeans banded together in that awful moment, brothers and sisters by the relationship of common danger and misfortune, without any remembrance of grade or cast.

For the most part the men were consulting how they might die the hardest.

All arms were loaded and prepared, ready for the reception of the first rush of the Sepoys after the last barrier should fall.

The women, poor souls, were huddled together in a heap, paralysed by grief and fear, some with their faces hidden on their arms, others sobbing and crying, some listening to the tapping sound made by the miners, and starting nervously at the slightest unusual noise.

There was one poor soul, lying with a little weakly creature in her arms, a poor little siege-baby two days old, trying feebly to comfort the man who had brought her half way across the world to meet death in this cruel guise.

"If on'y I hadn't brought yer, Nan," he kept saying over and over.

"Now don't you take on so, Jim," she murmured in reply. "If the worst comes it will soon be over—I don't care."

"But if on'y I hadn't brought yer!" Jim groaned. "If on'y I hadn't, yer'd ha' been safe and sound at home now. Oh, if on'y I had left yer there!"

"Nay, now don't you take on so," she cried with an ineffable smile on her own worn face. "I'd do the same if I had my time to come over again; and after all we will die here together when the worst does come."

"I was so proud o' being on the strength o' the regiment," the husband went on distractedly. "I never thought o' harm such as this coming to yer."

"Nay, now don't you take on so, Jim," she repeated wearily, "don't you now."

Tom Adair, who was standing near, turned and strode out into the verandah, a great knot creeping up his throat and scalding tears in his eyes.

But Betty, who had all along been as cool as ice, and as plucky as a tigress, bent down over the sick girl's bed.

"Nan," said she, "you are a brave, generous girl—a real Englishwoman. Some, nay many, would have reproached him for misfortune that he never looked for and could not guard against; but you are too brave and good for that. God keep you, my dear, and may he take us to a better world when our time comes—a world where there will be no oppression, no mutiny, no more partings any more for ever."

Then she bent still lower and kissed her gently and the little babe, laid a friendly hand on the husband's bowed head, and followed Tom.

Poor Tom!

He was sitting on a smart seat of bamboo work just outside the door, two revolvers beside him, his hands thrust deep down into his pockets, his eyes fixed miserably on space.

Betty sat down beside him and rested her head on his shoulder, regardless of the men standing about.

These were days when hard hearts grew soft, cold ones warm, when husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, comrades and comrades, clung to each other with the agonised clasp of despair.

"Oh, Betty, Betty!" he groaned, "now that poor chap's words have cut me—down to the very bottom of my heart! If only I hadn't brought you out here! Oh, my God, if only I had never brought you out of England!"

"Well, but, dearest, you never looked for this," Betty began.

Tom stopped her with a gesture of his hand.

"There was no need for it; your father begged me to leave the service, and I would not.

"I would bring you out here," he went on wretchedly, "fool that I was!"

"Don't think about it," Betty responded promptly. "It will be bad enough when it comes, though I don't know, Tom, whether it need be so bad after all, if they do blow that gate down and carry the barricade; it will be all over for both of us in no time—a couple of shots and we shall know nothing about it.

"But why think of it? The gate is not down yet; the wall is thick, for it is brick. The other was only mud. And if they carry that, the barrier may hold out a little longer, and help may come, at any moment."

"It will not hold out an hour. The same explosion will weaken it, and a handful of fire will burn it down in no time," Tom answered.

He glanced contemptuously at the weak barricade of chairs and tables, ladies' boxes and military chests, which had been laid within the walls.

Then he added—

"No; when that gate goes, it will be all up with us. I tell you, Betty, I could curse myself."

"Hush, hush, dear! This is not a time for curses," she murmured with gentle reproach. "Besides, I am like poor Nan Jackson in there; I'd do it over again to-morrow. Bless her!"

For a long time there was silence between them.

At last Betty spoke.

"Do you know that this is my birthday?" she said suddenly. "I had forgotten it until this moment."

"Well," she added, smiling, "nobody need wish me many happy returns of it, anyway."

Tom Adair clasped her a little closer, turning away his agonised face that she might not see it.

He had not forgotten; he remembered it well.

Betty chattered on in her soft, almost childish voice.

"Do you remember the day that you gave me this?" touching the golden cross on her bosom. "Ten years ago. How time flies! It was such a lovely morning, and you came to breakfast. Do you remember, Tom?"

"O my darling," he broke out, "God knows I never dreamt I was laying such a cross upon you!"

"Never mind, Tom, I can bear it, if need be. Ah, yes, I remember that day so well. What lots of presents I had!

"Mother gave me this chain—darling mother! I wonder what she is doing at this moment? It is just eight in the morning at home. Very likely they are at prayers—praying for us.

"And then daddy will go out for five minutes, and Driver will follow him and chivvy the cat across the lawn. Poor old Driver! he is ten years old now. Uncle Jack gave him to me that same day. I'm glad we didn't bring him."

"Betty, I cannot bear to hear you!" Tom cried, in an agonised voice.

"We may as well talk," said Betty mildly. "We may not have much more time to talk to each other."

If the truth be told, she wanted to die "game" as the saying is, and talked of the past to prevent herself thinking of the present.

"Yes! And aunt Joan sent me a doll. That was the last time, for, after I was ten, she sent 'useful' presents. O, how angry I was!" suddenly breaking into a very real laugh at the recollection of it.

"And we promptly went out and put an end to her. We hanged her and we shot her, and then we guillotined her with old Cookie's big chopper. And then we put her in a bag and floated her for a witch in the horse-trough. And, last of all, we burnt her, poor thing. Do you remember, Tom?"

"Everything," said Tom briefly.

"Poor aunt Joan! she did not understand children," Betty went on regretfully; "but she meant well always, and I daresay she is praying for us all this dreadful time.

"Poor aunt Joan! How history repeats itself! We made an end of her doll for fun, and here we are playing the same game in downright good earnest! How oddly things come about!"

"Oh Betty, Betty," Tom cried, "don't torture me any more! I am nearly mad when I think of what I have brought upon you."

"But we are together still—we shall be together when the end comes," Betty answered.

"Look at this," she added taking a little silver-clasped Bible from her pocket.

"I have written a few words of farewell to—them"—in spite of herself, her voice faltered—"to those at home. I have dated it to-day; and I think, if we are alive to-morrow, I will add something more. They will like to know, and there may be nobody to tell them anything. I thought, as it had a spring clasp, it might be preserved."

"Yes," he said. He could only assent; even to her he could not talk.

At that moment a young man stepped out on to the verandah—a young officer who had only been four months in India.

"Mr. Gore is going to give us the sacrament," he said. "Will you come?"

Betty rose immediately.

"Yes, we will come. We may not have the opportunity of taking it on earth again," she said; then followed him into the room, and took her place beside Nan Jackson's bed.

Always is the celebration of the Lord's Supper one of the most solemn services of the Church.

On that day it was something more than solemn—it was awesome.

The worn and haggard chaplain stood in the midst of that worn and haggard congregation, and began the charge, "Ye that do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins . . draw near with faith, and take this Holy Sacrament to your comfort, and make your humble confession to Almighty God, meekly kneeling upon your knees."

They were not all of one creed, the men and women who made that little band; yet, now that the gates of death were within their view, now that they were even just opening to receive them, all differences of faith had fallen away, all were gathered together in one mind to seek the aid of Him who once trod the same thorny path now pressed by their worn and weary feet; who once drank to the very dregs the bitter cup set before each one of them in that terrible hour of suspense and trial.

There were Protestants and Presbyterians, Roman Catholics and followers of Wesley, and there were some who had never troubled themselves to be anything.

All these now were gathered together as sheep under one shepherd, whether He would choose to lead them into a green pasture and beside the waters of comfort, or take them at once into the kingdom of heaven, wearing each a glorious crown, to shine for ever among the noble army of martyrs.

The last words of the solemn rite died away, and a death-like silence fell upon the little band of people, broken at length by the wailing cry of the tiny babe; then there was the sound of a crash without, the f-ph-ph-f—bang! of exploding gunpowder, the crackling and tearing sound of breaking and yielding timbers, and a shout of triumphant joy from the besieging Sepoys.

The gate was down

There was a wild rush of men to the doors, and one woman, Betty Adair.

"Don't leave me, Tom!" she cried. "Let me be close to you when the barricade falls, and then—send the bullet as near my heart as you can."

Even then the frail barricade shook visibly, and almost immediately a black face appeared above the summit. There was the sound of a shot, a piercing cry, and he fell back—dead!

Then there seemed to be another rush; the barrier shook again—again—more—

"It's all over now," said Betty Adair, with intense calmness. "Kiss me once, Tom, and then—end it."

Tom kissed her, not once, but a dozen times, and put the revolver to her breast. Betty looked with a smile straight into his white and haggard face.

"Be quick!" she said. "They are just over."

Tom's hand fell.

"It's no use, Betty, I can't do it. God help me! I cannot murder you."

"Give it to me," she answered; "I—can."

For a moment he held his hand to prevent her taking it; then, as the wild yells of the enemy broke on the sultry air, and he realised what would be her fate left to those wretches, he allowed her to take the weapon from him, and, turning his face to the wall, hid his eyes, that he might not see her die.

But—hark! What was that?

Betty lowered the pistol just as she was about to fire; another moment and she would have pulled the trigger. It was all done in an instant. Not ten minutes had passed since Mr. Gore had spoken the last word of the benediction, and but a moment before she had been without hope.

After listening but a few seconds, she thrust the revolver back into his hand.

"Fight it out, Tom. We are saved!" she cried. "Listen! Don't you hear it?"

"Hip—hip hur—ray! Hur—ray!"

Every head was raised; hope shone in every eye. Strong men trembled who had been calm; trembling terror-stricken women become still. The shout was very faint, and now and then the fierce yells of the Sepoys utterly drowned it. Then it rose on the air again, louder and nearer, "Hur—ray! Hur—ray!"

It put new life into that worn and well-nigh despairing garrison.

They did fight, desperately. The cheers came nearer and nearer.

Then there was a rush of kilted Highlanders, a conflict of a few seconds, and the mass of black faces surged, hesitated, broke up, and retreated, as a wave of the sea breaks against the rocks which have stood unconquered during thousands of years. And then, in the midst of the hand-shakings and blessings that went on on all sides—would you believe it?—Betty suddenly gave way, and burst into weak hysterical tears.

Never mind, Betty! There was many a man, bigger and stronger, but not braver than you, who choked down the tears he would have scorned to shed while grim Death stared him in the face.

The old colonel, patting her shoulder, said to a group of the new-comers.

"There, there! Mrs. Adair and the owner of the poor little siege-baby in there are the two bravest women in the world. God bless 'em both!"

The Old Farm.

BY EDMUND DOWNEY.

IN the old red farm-house, down by the Bounding Brook, a little girl lay dying. She had lived only seven years in this weary world, and could be of little use as yet about the house or farm.

Yet her mother sat beside her bed and wept continually as she looked at the little pale face among the pillows, and thought how fresh and rosy it used to be.

And Matty's little brother, Benjamin, who was but four years old, laid his curly head on his mother's knees, and cried because she cried, till he fell asleep without waiting for his supper of sweet brown bread and new milk, fresh from the brindled cow.

Through the back door, which stood wide open to let the fresh air into the room, Farmer Bennet came stooping along, with a wooden yoke on his shoulders.

From each side of the yoke swung a great wooden pail full of milk.

The sick child did not stir as he set the pails on the table, and laid the yoke on the floor.

And his wife pointed to little Benny asleep at her feet to show him why she did not rise to take the milk as she was accustomed to do.

"Poor little man!" said the farmer, looking sadly at his boy, as he drew near the bed. "It is dull times for him now; he has no playmate. I'm sure I haven't the heart to make any fun for him while she lies there."

He looked at Matty.

His thin, sunburned face quivered all over, and he brushed the back of his brown hand across his eyes once or twice.

"Not much change since tea-time, is there, wife?" he asked huskily.

"Not any, that I can see, Benjamin," she answered, rocking herself to and fro in her trouble.

"Well, it's hard, but I'm afraid we must make up our minds to lose her. She has been a sweet, dear little daughter to us, and she will be an angel very soon in Heaven."

"Oh, no; don't say that, husband," sobbed the poor mother, taking him by the hand. "I can't give her up any way in the world, I can't—I can't."

She leaned her head against him, and cried so bitterly that Benny woke, and had to be consoled, and fed, and rocked to sleep in the long green settee that stood against the wall.

And still Matty rested quietly.

So quietly that they could only tell that she was breathing by putting their faces down against her lips.

She was dying quietly, and without the slightest pain.

That was the only comfort they had.

But it was a comfort.

They had lost a child three years before, and had endured the agony of seeing him fight for breath almost to the last moment of his existence, while he lifted his little hands towards them all the while, as if he was asking them to take away his pain.

That sorrowful deathbed was present in the thoughts of both the parents on this evening.

"Thank Heaven she does not struggle and suffer as little Willy did," said the father, at last. "It seems to me that I could never bear to look on such a sight as that again. But, oh, even this is hard—hard to go through with and hard to understand. I thought my children would stand beside my deathbed and close my eyes. And here the Lord is taking them from me, one by one. We shall have only Hannah and Benny left when she is gone."

The poor mother could not answer him.

The room where they were sitting was the only furnished one in the whole house.

It was kitchen, bedroom, and all, but the diligent care of Mrs. Bennet kept it clean and neat.

Between the two windows that looked out on the morning hung an old-fashioned looking-glass, with two bright peacock's feathers in the frame.

They had been placed there by little Matty the day before she fell ill.

And on a small table that stood under the glass were her spelling-book and primer, and willow dinner-basket, just as she had laid them down on that last afternoon when she came in from school.

Two little wooden chairs stood side by side between the table and bed where Matty was lying.

They had been made by the farmer for his two eldest children—the Hannah, of whom they had already spoken, and a son, Richard, who had gone to sea at fourteen years of age, and had never been heard of since.

Each child of the family had used the little chairs in their turn.

They were Matty's and Benny's now.

Beyond the bed a third window looked into the garden, and towards the barn-yard, where "Brindle" and "Bossy" spent their nights, in company with the old sorrel mare, who had faithfully done the errands of the family for sixteen years.

The windows were uncurtained.

The floor was uncarpeted, and the furniture was scanty, and rudely made by the farmer himself.

Yet it had been a happy home, and those who dwelt in it loved God and each other, and thanked Heaven daily for the blessings still vouchsafed them.

The time had been when Benjamin Bennet had been the owner of a beautiful and valuable farm.

But after Richard left them and disappeared so strangely, nothing seemed to have prospered with them.

Step by step they went downward, till now they were a broken and sorrowful couple, living on a heavily mortgaged farm, and seeing nothing but the dreaded poor-house before them in the end, if all the children were taken away, to whom they had looked for comfort and affection, and assistance in their helpless old age.

"I may as well tell you all the trouble at once, Matty," said the old man, as they sat hand in hand beside the bed. "Old Squire Ross was here to-day."

"Oh, dear!" sighed Mrs. Bennet, "won't he have any mercy on you," Benjamin, at a time like this?"

"He says he has nothing to do with our troubles, wife, and he means to sell the farm."

"Then he will foreclose the mortgage?" she said.

"He has foreclosed it, Matty."

The poor woman looked round the room.

"Matty was born here, and Benny," she said, with a trouble in her voice. "I did hope we could live and die here, father! I thought you could finish off the spare room and the chambers by odd jobs, and I meant to save all the rags and have a carpet woven for the spare room floor, with plenty of bright stripes in it to please the little ones. But, oh, dear, what shall we do husband, when we are turned away from here, and where shall we go?"

"I don't know, wife; but God knows. Nothing can happen to us that He has not meant for us, and whatever is His will, we are both willing to submit to it, are we not?"

His wife did not answer.

So many troubles, coming one upon the other, had almost broken her heart and turned her brain.

Still holding her hand, the farmer fell upon his knees and prayed aloud—

"Oh, God, do with us as you think best. Take away our property, our home, and even our beloved children, if we must lose them, but leave us our faith in the goodness and mercy of Heaven, and help us always to feel that He chastens us for good alone."

Before he had finished his prayer, his wife sank down beside him.

"Yes, we will trust in God through all, no matter how sorely He may see fit to try us," said the wife, as she bent once more above the quiet little child on the bed.

She laid her hand upon her forehead, and then started back with a slight cry, which she immediately checked.

"What is it?" asked the farmer.

"Her eyes are open, Benjamin," she whispered. "She looked up at me as if she knew me, and, you, know, the doctor said that if she could be got to know any of us again, the pressure on the brain would be over, and she would live. Go for him at once, dear."

"Let me look at her first."

Trembling all over, the strong man bent above his child.

Yes!

The deep blue eyes were opening again.

They looked up at him with a smile.

"Matty is sleepy. Kiss Matty good-night, father," said the little faint voice that they had never hoped to hear again.

"Precious little daughter. Father will kiss you," he said, controlling his emotion by a mighty effort.

He kissed her.

Her lips and cheeks were no longer parched and feverish.

"Oh, my God, how can I thank Thee for this mercy?" he murmured, as he made room for his wife beside the bed.

"She is better. She will certainly get well," said Mrs. Bennet, wiping away her tears lest they should frighten the child.

"And, Benjamin, I have just thought that the doctor will have to pass us on his way home this evening, for he went beyond here to-day to set a man's broken leg. I know he will call as he goes by, for little Matty, bless her! was always a favorite of his. Oh, Benjamin, what do we care for losing this home, or any other, now. So long as you and the children are spared, I will live in the poorest hut and be contented."

"There he is," said the farmer, as a knock came at the outer door.

He went to open it.

A stranger stood there.

A tall, dark, bearded man, handsomely dressed, who asked for a night's lodging.

"Come in," said the farmer, heartily. "It's a poor place, but we are too happy to turn away any human being from our door this night."

And he told him of the sick child, and its unexpected recovery, before he took him into the room where the mother was still hanging over her darling, scarcely able to believe in the reality of her own joy.

"A gentleman who wants to stay here to-night, mother," said the farmer, lighting a candle and introducing the guest.

Mrs. Bennet came forward with excuses and a welcome.

The stranger looked fixedly at her but did not speak.

She trembled and turned pale.

"Who are you?" she said, in an agitated tone, and laid her hand upon his sleeve.

"Wife," exclaimed the surprised farmer.

"Mother, mother, I am Dick," cried the stranger, bursting into tears, and kneeling at her feet. "I have come home a rich man, and you shall never want for anything again. Forgive me for leaving you all these years."

Forgive him! Dick, that bearded man! Dick, who had left home a slender curly-headed boy!

I leave you to imagine how they took the wanderer to their arms and hearts.

And there was little Matty, smiling from her pillows, and quite able to understand that this was the lost elder brother for whom she had seen her mother shed so many tears, when they brought him to her bedside.

"I was a careless, heedless young dog at first, and I never dreamed how you would grieve about me here," said Dick penitently. "And when I grew older, I made up my mind that I would bring back a fortune with me when I came. It was a long time before I found it.

"But it is mine at last, which is the same as to say that it belongs to both of you as well," he added, kissing his mother again and again.

"Thank Heaven, we can keep this dear home!" said Mrs. Bennet, looking round the humble room as if it were a palace.

"How I wish Hannah were here to meet you this night, Richard. The dear girl has gone out to work in the city for these two years past, since father grew so poor, and she brings nearly every penny of her wages to him every month to help clear the mortgage off the farm. Dear child! She can keep her little earnings now for her own use.

"She will never earn another penny, unless it is by work done in this house, or her own," said Dick, gaily. "I inquired about you all on my way home, mother, and I went to Hannah's place, and brought her away for good. And here she is."

He went to the door and led his sister in.

"We waited outside a long time, consulting how I had best make myself known to you. See, Hannah, little Matty is better."

But Hannah was already embracing the lovely child, whom she had left so sadly on her last visit home.

"Kneel down with me, my dear children," said the farmer, as soon as he could command his voice sufficiently to speak. "We should be the most ungrateful of all God's creatures if we forgot to thank Him for this happiness. He knows well how heavy and downcast my poor heart was only one half-hour ago. I had no hope then of seeing one child brought back from death's door, and another arisen from the grave itself, as it seems to me."

There was not a dry eye among them as they listened to the rude but fervent thanksgiving which the uneducated farmer poured forth.

They rose from their knees, and embraced each other tenderly.

Then Mrs. Bennet led her first-born to the cradle of the little brother whom he had never seen.

And Hannah busied herself with the preparation of a savory supper, to which they sat down (while Matty and Benito each slumbered healthfully on their pillows), the happiest family in the land.

So may it happen to us all.

To say from the depths of our hearts "His will be done!" however hard and grievous that holy will may seem to be; and to find our faith rewarded by the restoration of our beloved ones, although their steps have faltered on the icy threshold of death's door.

The Handicap.

BY E. P. SPENCER

JOHN BROWN had commenced life in a foundling hospital, and, as a comical little street arab he had attracted the attention of a young nobleman, who had made himself the talk of the town by his eccentric freaks and his reckless extravagances.

It is needless to say John was no fool.

Indeed, he was very much the reverse, and as his London street training had developed a naturally shrewd intelligence, and had given him a perfect insight into human nature, he proceeded—once installed as buttons, or page, to his grace—to profit by his experience and to make some money.

Even at the early age of 15, he had learned to select a winner with some accuracy and to bet his half-crowns as gaily as his master did his thousands.

He also learned to keep his eyes open and his tongue silent.

The duke, after a few years of wasteful dissipation, got into difficulties, gave up racing, and married an heiress.

Two years later John married the duchess' maid, and bloomed suddenly into the snug owner of The Jolly Turfmen public-house and sporting club.

How John got the money to set up his establishment he never told anyone.

Some said the duke bought his secrecy; others said that the duchess bought her maid's.

However, let the uncharitable tongues wag as they willed, John Brown's fortune was made.

Before another five years had passed over his head, he had developed into one of the heaviest and best-known book-makers in London.

He had but one great trouble for him—namely, the existence of one Bill Sadlie, who was also a book-maker, and who seemed to perpetually cross his path.

The fact of the matter was John Brown was of a spiteful, jealous, envious disposition, Bill Sadlie was his bete noire.

Sadlie was, perhaps, a more clever and shrewd bookmaker than Brown, and he was, if possible, a greater rogue.

He hated John as cordially as John hated him, and he would give the best book he ever made to "leg him up," as he expressed it, in some way.

Major Frank Lundie had been very unlucky of late, and had lost a lot of money backing a mare that only ran second, so he was not in the best of humors as he sat down to breakfast in the Plunger club.

The two letters the servant handed him with his morning paper did not tend to soothe his temper.

He looked at them suspiciously, and placed them address downward, by the side of his plate.

He felt instinctively that their contents would not be agreeable, but he screwed up his courage at last, opened them nervously, and after reading them, arose from the table, leaving his breakfast untasted.

The first letter was very short and to the point:

DEAR FRANK: The bill will be due on the 21st. For Heaven's sake meet it. Moses swears he will not renew.

Yours as ever,

CLARISSA.

The second ran:

DEAREST FRANK: I am so flurried and fretted, I can scarce hold my pen to write to you. Fancy that nasty Mme. Dubosq says that if I do not pay her immediately she will take legal proceedings against me, or do some horrible thing like that. She charges, the most frightful prices for everything. I never imagined that I owed her so much—nearly three hundred pounds sterling.

Is it not shocking? Would any one believe she could be so wicked and nasty? Do, like a dear good brother lend me [illegible] pounds sterling.

I am really frightened. Imagine the scandal—and now that I am almost sure Jones will propose.

Your affectionate sister,

LILLIE.

"What on earth shall I do?" muttered Frank Lundie, in disgust; "and Lillie, too, the little fool, to get into a mess like this just when that run 'end' is coming up to time."

The major turned the situation over in his mind as he walked up and down the room, but from no point of view it was a pleasant one.

After a good quarter of an hour had elapsed, he sat down again to his breakfast with a set, hard look on his face.

"I will do it!" he muttered savagely, breaking an egg shell. "It is dirty work, but I'll do it all the same."

Faultlessly got up, two hours after, he strolled up Regent street in the direction of John Brown's residence.

John was in, and was, of course, very glad to see him, for they had had many betting transactions in the past, and Major L[illegible] had always paid up honorably.

"I have come to speak to you about some money," said the major.

At the word money Brown was all attention, and his little gray eyes were fixed cunningly on the major, who continued—

"I want a thousand to-morrow, and I am going to ask you to give it to me."

"It's a pile of money, major. There is [illegible] counting in ten centuries."

"I know that, but I don't wish you to [illegible] to me for nothing," replied the major, [illegible]ppishly.

"[illegible] talk out plain like: I'm a [illegible]an, I am."

"Any one hear us?" said the major, going [illegible] to the door, which he opened [illegible].

Then, having closed it, he returned to his seat, and, looking John Brown steadily in the face, said—

"If you let me have the money I will run Marsquita in the Hilton handicap exactly as you like. She is sure to be a hot favorite."

"Did she run her true form in the Silkshire?" asked John Brown, eagerly.

"She was not half trained, nor was she meant to win. She did not run within ten pounds of her form.

"And the fold handicap?"

"Johnnie Dodd stayed too long: he did not call on her soon enough," said Major Lundie, looking knowingly at Brown. "I wanted to get her into the Hilton at a fair weight. So you see," he continued, "it's a safe thing either way. She can win in a canter, and the public know it. You can't get ten to one against her to do it."

"What do you propose to do, major?" asked John Brown.

"That you lend me a thousand to-morrow. I train and run the mare as you wish, and you arrange the jockey. We go halves in the profits, and you get back your money before we divide the profits."

"What will her ladyship say?" asked Brown.

"Leave that to me: she must do as I desire," replied the major.

"Well, major, I'll trust you. Honor amongst pals, say I. You come round to-morrow morning, and I'll let you have the money."

The interview over, Frank Lundie strolled down Regent street, and as he did so he felt very much like a man who had had a tooth drawn—rather astonished at finding that it was not such a painful operation to undergo, yet highly pleased to find that it was all over.

He had, however, yet another interview before him, for Lady Dorothea Verdant was part owner of the mare, and though he had spoken so beautifully to Brown of what Lady Dolly—as she was called—must do, he did not feel altogether comfortable in submitting this special matter to her.

Bill Sadlie, coming down the opposite side of the street, saw the major leaving John Brown's door.

"What can he be up to?" he muttered, as he crossed over to talk to him. "Morning, major."

"Good morning, Sadlie," replied the major, blandly.

"Backing the mare for the Hilton, major?" asked Sadlie.

"Yes, I suppose so."

"[illegible] to one as often as you like, major."

"Thank you, I shall think about it."

"Is she to run, major?" asked Sadlie eagerly.

"She runs. Good morning," replied the major, turning on his heel and walking away.

Bill Sadlie stood looking down the street after the retiring figure of the major, much puzzled at his abrupt manner.

"I'll have my eye on him, I will," he muttered, as he walked away. "He and John Brown are up to no good, I'll bet."

As the major had anticipated, he had some difficulty with Lady Dolly.

At first she would not listen to the idea of being mixed up in such a transaction, but when the major pictured to her the money that was to be made, her good intentions left her and she gave her consent.

Of course, her husband knew nothing of her partnership with Maj. Lundie; but then he was merely, as she said, a stupid city man, who knew little of anything except the rate of exchange, prices of stocks, and bank rates of interest, so what was the use of talking to him about horses?

The mare Marsquita was much fancied by the public, and had already come in 7 to 1 in the betting.

Her trials had been all that could be wished, and, strange to say, everyone knew they were so.

The sporting papers and prophets selected her quantin only as the winner of the Hilton, and Maj. Lundie's friends looked on the thing as a certainty, particularly as he was credited with having backed her for an enormous amount.

Brine, who was a first-class jockey, was engaged to ride the mare. He was of a silent, taciturn nature, and rarely spoke except in monosyllables.

He was a sworn friend and ally of John Brown's, and of late had become a steady frequenter of the back parlor of "The Jolly Turfmen."

Up to the morning of the race he had not received instructions how he was to ride, though he understood perfectly well that he would have to do as John Brown directed. When, at last, he did receive them they were simple enough.

"Keep well [illegible] and [illegible]," said Brown. "Do it well, but make a good race of it, and recollect, you must do it in such a way that the 'cutest men' in England shall not know what you have done."

The Hilton was a magnificent meeting. Maj. Lundie was perfectly content with the world in general and with himself in particular, for John Brown had already laid a tremendous lot against the mare, who was now a hot favorite.

John was in his glory, shouting at the top of his voice: "Marsquita I bet against; six to one against Marsquita."

The major, standing a few yards off, watched him, in high delight, and as he saw him jotting down bet after bet against Marsquita, his face rippled into a smile of avaricious contentment.

Just before the horses were saddled he walked across to Lady Dolly's drag, and, climbing up on the box seat beside her, whispered:

"Everything is going on splendidly, dear. Brown has laid a tremendous lot against her, and the ring are making her a hot favorite."

"What have you done?" asked Lady Dolly.

"Nothing. I leave it all to Brown, and we divide afterward."

"Do you think we can trust Brine?"

"John Brown says he would trust him with his life," said the major, decisively.

"I am very nervous about it all. How I wish it were over!" murmured Lady Dolly.

"Nonsense, dear; you will find Brine does it beautifully. I'll go into the inclosure now and see him mounted," said the major, contentedly. "Have you done anything?" he asked, getting down from the drag.

"Only a little with Sadlie," said Lady Dolly, carelessly.

"Sorry you did anything—you ought to have been contented with what we shall win with Marsquita. Outside her it was a 'best up' which of half a dozen wins."

Marsquita was hot and nervous, and it cost some trouble to get Brine safely into the saddle.

The trainer and the stable boy had a difficult task in trying to keep her quiet, and the latter, while struggling with the mare, asked the major to hold Brine's overcoat.

The major took it readily, but at that moment the animal kicked out viciously, knocked the coat out of his hand, and scattered the contents of the pockets on the ground.

In his hurry and agitation while picking up Brine's scattered property and avoiding at the same time the mare's hind legs, the major thrust the various papers that lay on the ground into his own pocket instead of into that of the overcoat.

Brine, however, got safely mounted at last, and, as he entered the mare before the grand stand, everyone was loud in her praise.

"There goes the winner! What splendid condition? She'll win in a canter!" was the general exclamation.

"Five to one against Marsquita!" shouted John Brown; and then the roar of bookmakers commenced, and Marsquita went to 4 to 1 before the flag fell.

Maj. Lundie walked across the ring to talk to John Brown as the horses went by to the starting point.

"Pretend you are booking a bet," he said, and let us talk about the mare."

"What is it, major? I have much time to lose."

"I am nervous about Brine. What shall I do if he does not pull her cleverly?"

"Don't be silly, major. Brine is the neatest hand at pulling a horse in England. But don't bother me know, for I am losing time, and, what's more important, money, too. Marsquita I bet against. Four to one against Marsquita!" shouted Brown, turning his back to his partner.

After three or four false starts the flag at last fell, and they were off amidst a roar of excitement.

The major and Lady Dolly watched the race with bated breath, for both of them were intensely excited.

As the horses passed the grand stand for the first time, Marsquita was last but one, and Brine was riding perfectly according to his instructions, though he had as much as he could do to hold the mare, who was pulling hard.

"Good heavens! he will be found out if he rides like that!" muttered the major, nervously.

Lady Dolly also grew very pale as she saw the distance increase between Marsquita and the leading horses, but John Brown, standing on the lower steps of the stand, was a picture of happiness, as he continued to shout:

"Marsquita I bet against."

Half-way around the course Marsquita drew up to the leading horses, and as they came in a cluster into the straight she was fourth.

The major was now less excited, but he murmured nervously as he watched the mare:

"If he only does it cleverly now."

Lady Dolly was feverishly agitated and deadly pale, and she watched Brine with staring eyes as he sat down in the saddle, turned the whip on the mare, passed three of the horses, and caught the leader just at the distance post.

"Splendid! hurrah!" shouted the major, excitedly, and then, turning to Lady Dolly, he added: "He will do it beautifully, and lose by a head."

It was a magnificent struggle between Marsquita and the Roving Dutchman, and every one believed it was a dead heat. The Dutchman, however, was beaten by a head.

Maj. Lundie left the course immediately after the race. He could not stand the congratulations of his friends; and Bill Sadlie watched John Brown's pale face with a friendship expression of delight on his own.

That night the major found in his pocket the papers which had dropped out of Brine's overcoat.

On glancing at them he was astonished to see one in Lad Dolly's handwriting. Turning it over, he read:

"I promise to pay Stephen Brine £400 if he wins the Hilton handicap on Marsquita.

"DOROTHEA VERDANT."

And underneath was written, in an unformed hand:

"I promise to pay Stephen Brine the sum of £200 if he wins the Hilton handicap on Maj. Lundie's mare, Marsquita.

"WILLIAM SMITH."

A TOUCHING INCIDENT.

A Young Girl's Dementia---How it was Occasioned---Some New and Startling Truths.

The St. Louis express, on the New York Central road, was crowded one evening recently when at one of the way stations an order was given, accompanied by a young lady, with red eyes and flushed cheeks. As the conductor approached the pair, the young lady arose, and in a pleading voice said:

"Please, sir, don't let him carry me to the asylum. I am not crazy: I am a little tired, but not mad. Oh! no indeed. Won't you please have papa take me back home?" The conductor, accustomed though he was to all phases of humanity, looked with astonishment at the pair as did the other passengers in their vicinity. A few words from the father, however, sufficed, and the conductor passed on while the young lady turned her face to the window. The writer chanced to be seated just behind the [illegible] and could not forego the desire to [illegible]. What a sad face and a [illegible] were the father and:

"My daughter has been attending the seminary in a distant town and was succeeding remarkably. Her natural qualities, together with a great ambition, placed her in the front ranks of the school, but she studied too closely, was not careful of her health, and her poor brain has been turned. I am taking her to a private asylum where we hope she will soon be better."

At the next station the old man and his daughter left the cars, but the incident so suggestive of Shakespeare's Ophelia, awakened strange thoughts in the mind of the writer. It is an absolute fact that while the population of America increased thirty per cent. during the decade between 1870 and 1880 the insanity increase was *over one hundred and thirty-five per cent.* for the same period. Travelers by rail, by boat, or in carriages in any part of the land see large and elaborate buildings, and inquire what they are?

Insane asylums!

Who builds them?

Each State; every county: hundreds of private individuals, and in all cases their capacity is taxed to the utmost.

Why?

Because men, in business and the professions, women, at work or in society, and children at school overtax their mental and nervous forces by work, worry and care. This brings about nervous disorders, indigestion and eventually mania.

It is not always trouble with the head that causes insanity. It far oftener arises from evils in other parts of the body. The nervous system determines the status of the brain. Any one who has periodic headaches; occasional dizziness; a dimness of vision; a ringing in the ears; a feverish head; frequent nausea or a sinking at the pit of the stomach, should take warning at once. The stomach and head are in direct sympathy and if one be impaired the other can never be in order. Acute dyspepsia causes more insane suicides than any other known agency; and the man, woman or child whose stomach is deranged is not and cannot be safe from the coming on at any moment of mania in some one of its many terrible forms.

The value of moderation and the imperative necessity of care in keeping the stomach right must therefore be clear to all. The least appearance of indigestion, or malassimilation of food should be watched as carefully as the first approach of an invading army. Many means have been advocated for meeting such attacks, but all have [illegible] for the purpose of regulating the stomach, toning it up to proper action, keeping its nerves in a normal condition and purifying the blood, Warner's Tippecanoe Tonic Bitters [illegible] all diseases of [illegible]. It is [illegible] pure and [illegible], it is certain to build up, not debilitate, while it cannot by any possibility injure even a child, the fact that it was used in the cases of the famous Harrison family's [illegible] positive of its merit as it has [illegible] without the test of time. As a tonic and revivifier it is simply wonderful. It has relieved the agony of the stomach in thousands of cases; soothed the tired nerves; produced peaceful sleep and averted the coming on of a mania more to be dreaded than death itself.

MUSHROOMS.—The true mushroom is invariably found amongst grass in rich [illegible] pastures, and never on or about [illegible], or in woods. Many cases of poisoning have occurred owing to the supposed mushrooms being gathered from stumps or in woods. It is true there is a certain variety found in woods and woody places, but, as far as most people are concerned, it is best left alone.

The [illegible] fisherman [illegible] Winnebago Lake [illegible] miles long, and [illegible] 20,000 books on it.

Our Young Folks.

THE FAIRY KITTEN.

BY PIPKIN.

THE old mill river was gurgling and singing as it glided along amid the glimmer of sunshine rife everywhere, and a great launch was to render the day famous—that of the *Red Rover* and the *Flying Dutchman*. And now their builders themselves, with two especial chums, were bounding along the river's bank, carrying their respective vessels.

"Mine'll cut yours out, Dick," said Bob Hayter, the owner of the *Red Rover*, eyeing his little bark with boyish affection and pride.

"Not that!" cried confident Dick Henley; "no *Red Rover* in the world will beat the *Flying Dutchman*; my uncle says he never saw a neater little craft than mine, and he's a sailor, you know."

"Well, I've got a right to stand up for my own, haven't I?" spoke Bob, hotly.

"Now, don't you two quarrel, or all our fun's over," said pacific Harry Lee.

"Now, don't quarrel," cried the fourth, Will Grey, clapping the two good-humoredly on the shoulder; then they all laughed and went on.

The right spot for the launch was found at last, miniature planks were laid down, and all the observances of a real launch attended to, their young faces a pleasant study the while as they did this and that; and now came the all important moment.

"We'll let them go dash through the flood gates and by the mile," averred Bob, his cheeks glowing as the *Red Rover* swept out and took the lead.

"Yes, right through the flood-gates, Jacob Till isn't the man to say no. And see if the *Flying Dutchman* isn't first!" cried vain-glorious Dick.

But ah! there on the very mill platform, as they drew near, stood the miller, Jacob Till, Jemmy Crossly, an old man who lived hard by, and Jemmy, his waggish grandson, whom the boys generally averred to be as much like a cricket as his grandfather was like a crab-apple. The elder Jemmy was crying—ay, actually crying—his head bare, his white locks streaming out on the chill wind, as he bent over something lying at his feet.

"Why, 'tis old Prin," cried Will Grey.

Prin was an old, cross-grained dog, very like his master, if we may believe the boys, very much beloved by the old man, but which had been missing for days past.

But Jacob Till was shaking his fist at the lads.

"Be off with you, you young Turks, or 'twill be the worse for you and your precious ships; I'm going to shut the flood-gates," he roared, while Jemmy wiped his eyes and gazed wrathfully their way.

"Why, what's in the wind?" returned Dick. "We aren't doing nothing, only sailing our vessels."

"Back, I say, or I'll wreck 'em," roared Jacob. "I'll have no dog-killers dabbling in my water—you've brought the old man's dog to a watery grave—see here! we've just fished him up."

Ah! there lay Prin, quite lifeless, in the sunshine.

"Oh! we didn't!" protested staunch Dick.

"Ye were always threatening the poor varmint."

"Yes, and so were half the parish—but we had no hand in his end," floated back in reply.

"Oh! you said he should drink water," piped young Jemmy.

"Ah, well! we can't talk of that now—we've other fish to fry," Bob laughed merrily.

Jacob Till might have thought it an word of defiance, he might have deemed it right to stand by the old man and punish his tormentors—if they deserved the title, at any rate, before they realized that he was in earnest, he was at the flood-gates.

"Oh, don't!" pleaded Dick, his face quivering as his eye took in the fate of the two pretty, dainty barks riding, so to speak, proudly at anchor, stayed by the detaining string.

But Jacob was inexorable; the gates swung to. There was a mighty tumult of water—tug and toil as the two owners might, their ships were sunked under before their very eyes, hopelessly wrecked.

"'Tis a crying shame, it is—it is!" sobbed Bob, big boy of ten years though he was, as they drew the dripping remains to shore.

"We'll be even with you, Jemmy Crossly!" cried Dick as a parting salute, as they turned away homeward, vowing vengeance to Jemmy Crossly.

Ah, well! they were rollicking, mischievous youngsters, but not vindictive; their anger was but as the foam on the old mill river, seen, and then gone. On the next day they fell to ship-building again, giving heart and soul into their work.

"Harry, I say, I've hit upon a plan for getting out of Jemmy Crossly; we mustn't let bygones be bygones, we owe him a grudge," said Harry Lee.

They were all four in the shed they termed their workshop, the sweet February morning gathering about them, and as prankish as March dares.

"Have you got with it?" and instantly there was a crowding together, and much whispering.

"Yes!" averred Bob; "I heard him say he was going to send a little white lump of a kitten to Miss Milly, at the rectory, as a Valentine's present—I heard him telling Jemmy about it."

"Well?"—and now there was much shrugging of shoulders, and pressing closer together.

"Let's put a dead rat into the basket—young Jemmy's sure to carry her that way—and take out the kitten; 'twould be a rare joke to make a silly of him, sending the brute to the young lady; he ought to suffer for swamping our ships." So did the plotter unfold his scheme.

"Oh, ay, he ought to suffer, and 'twould be only a ticklish suffering, not like what he gave us," and a tender regret was in Bob's voice.

"But how is it to be done?" asked Will Grey.

"Never you fear—I'll manage that," averred Harry—and they knew he would.

"And to-morrow's the very day—the fourteenth." A chuckle went round, and soon they separated.

"Here it is," said Harry, the next morning, displaying a fine dead rat to his companions' admiring eyes, as they all mustered near old Jemmy's cottage to await the tide of events. "Now then!" Behind the garden hedge they popped, for the cottage door was opening.

"Be sure to say Jemmy Crossly sent her, with his kind respects to Miss Milly, as a Valentine's present," said Jemmy the elder at the door.

"All right," returned the younger, going off.

"Now then, we must get him to put down the basket; then out comes the kitten and in goes the rat," said Harry.

But Jemmy fell into their toils without any of their trickery.

Before he had gone very far he found he needed a stick, so down went the basket, and no sooner was his back turned than, as if by magic, out came the kitten, in went the rat.

Poor little frightened kitty was hidden away under Harry's jacket, and Jemmy, furnished with a stick, returned, took up his basket, and marched on his way.

"Now, if we could see him come back, and pop the kitten in again, 'twould be a trick worth playing," remarked Harry, so as "where there's a will there's a way" with lads, they loitered about; and, anon, the redoubtable Jemmy appeared.

"I say, my lad, is that a kitten there, away over that field?" cried Harry, as the four drew near.

"Where?" was the eager response—down went the precious basket, and away he ran. Now Miss Pussy was in her own quarters again, and the rat in Harry's pocket. The other three joined in the race after the imaginary kitten; then all three returned, Jemmy with a rueful face, to take up his basket and trot on homeward.

The four lads marched behind in his wake.

"Well, what did Miss Milly say?" questioned old Jemmy, meeting the younger one at the door.

"'Twasn't a kitten, but a dead rat, when I got there," were his astounding tidings, and old Jemmy fairly cut a caper in his ecstasy.

Nay, don't tell him, Jemmy," said he.

"I were, and I see 'un, and so can you," and the boy held open the basket for inspection. Ah! there was the kitten, all right.

"She must be a fairy kitten or some'at; I know she was a rat a while ago," affirmed the boy; "and Miss Milly screeched at 'un, and so did cook."

Young Jemmy rubbed his eyes, but it was a fact that a little white ball of a kitten lay in the basket!

"Ye made a mistake, lad; there ain't no fairies in these days—carry her back; I'd set my mind on Miss Milly having her; 'cause she felt for me all along of Prin and them boys."

So Jemmy departed, and our heroes once more crept forth, and actually performed one more trick.

"'Tis a kitten, Miss Milly—see here!" so the boy accosted the little lady, meeting her on the lawn, four heads bo-peeping at the rectory gate.

The child laughed, yet shuddered, as peeping into the basket she espied the same dead rat!

"Well, I never! she were a kitten when I set out, and now she's a rat," gasped Jemmy.

"Ah! what have you here?" asked the rector.

"Grandfather has sent Miss Milly a white kitten as keeps changing into a rat," said Jemmy.

"Ah! and I fancy I know who's at the bottom of the plot," laughed the rector, and he went down to the gate where were those peeping heads.

"Well, lads, what's this prank for?" he asked.

"We said we'd pay Jemmy Crossly out for telling fibs about us, and getting our ships wrecked."

"Ah, well! here he comes," averred the rector.

"Ah! have she turned again?" queried the old man, toiling upand peering into the basket.

"Ay, grandfather."

"'Tis only fun—boys' fun, Jemmy, to punish you for a wrong. See there," observed the rector, pointing to Harry with the kitten in his arms.

"Here's Miss Milly's (fairy) Valentine, Jemmy—where's our vessels?"

"Where's my old Prin?" was the reply.

"Prin! why I've had him a private prisoner for days past, to try and teach him a lesson not to steal," said the rector, and all eyes were wide open.

"Then whose was the dead dog?" gasped old Jemmy.

"Ah! you've all been at cross purposes," laughed the reverend gentleman, "but 'all's well that ends well'; no harm is done. But for the future don't be too ready to lay blame till you're sure you are right, Jemmy. And you youngsters, I am no advocate for practical jokes; still, as I say, no harm's done, and you've had your fun out of it."

A DEAD FAILURE.

BY FRANK ABELL.

"UPON my word, my dear," said Mrs. Falconer Fielding. "I begin to think you have made a very great mistake."

Nelly Fielding drooped her head a little, twisted the ring around and around upon her finger, and said nothing.

Perhaps she, too, was beginning to think that she had made "a great mistake," when she engaged herself to Robert Bruce, who was only a young doctor, with more patience than patients, and no particular prospects in the world.

Nell had thought it all right as long as she lived in the country.

But a season under the tutelage of Mrs Falconer Fielding, her city aunt, had led her to alter her views upon a variety of subjects.

"Don't you see, Eleanor, my love," said Mrs. Fielding, "how very unjust it was for him to bind you down to an engagement before you had seen anything of the world?"

"But he bound himself, too, aunt," pleaded Nelly.

"Oh, himself. That's quite a different thing. He could expect to do no better. But a girl is ruined by these long engagements—yes, simply ruined, and I really think George Erskine admires you very much."

Nelly was silent.

She hardly knew what to decide.

And when aunt had rustled downstairs in her violet moire-antique and plumed hat to drive in the park with another matron as flinty-hearted and worldly as herself, Eleanor turned to Cora Eldon, Aunt Falconer's poor relation, who was neither lady nor servant, and who was just then engaged diligently in ripping up one of the rich widow's half-worn velvet evening dresses.

"Cora," said she, "what would you do?"

"About what?" said Cora, lifting a pair of long-lashed, grey eyes.

"Why, about this engagement, to be sure."

"Is Dr. Bruce in any way changed from what he was when you first pledged yourself to him?" asked Cora.

"No; I don't know that he is," confessed Eleanor.

"Well, then, what right have you to break your word?"

Nelly pouted a little.

"You are so downright, Cora."

"One can't very well have two ways of thinking on a subject like this," said Cora, clipping diligently away at the long seams, "and I consider Dr. Bruce a fit match for a princess."

"Yes," admitted Nelly; "but then he is so poor."

"He is no poorer than when you first promised to be his wife."

"No; but my ideas have altered since then."

"One should know one's own mind," said Cora, brusquely.

And that evening, when Dr. Bruce called as usual, Nelly Fielding met him in the little boudoir where Cora Eldon was still at work.

Cora rose and gathered up her material, but Robert and Nelly both spoke at once.

"Do not leave us, Miss Eldon," said the young doctor, kindly. "We have no secrets from you."

"No, Cora, don't go," pleaded Nelly, who was a little nervous and fluttering. "I have made up my mind to tell Robert how I feel. The truth is, Robert, I am getting tired of our long engagement."

"So am I," said Robert, good-humoredly. "There's no reason why it should last any longer. I'm ready to be married to-morrow if you say so."

"And what should we live on?"

Dr. Bruce looked at Nelly in some surprise.

"What should we live on?" he repeated. "To be sure my income is not large, but there is no danger of our starving."

"The fact is, Robert, we never should have become engaged. I see the folly of it now, as I never did before."

"Do you mean that you are tired of your bargain, Nelly?"

"I mean that I think we had better give up the whole idea."

"And simply because I am poor?"

"That is reason enough," said Nelly, with dignity. "If a man really loves a woman, he will not call upon her to become a mere drudge and menial."

"The marriage service says, 'for richer, for poorer, for better, for worse,'" spoke Bruce, bitterly.

"I was merely figurative," retorted Nelly, coloring up.

"Oh, Nelly," interposed Cora, as she saw the pain in Robert's face.

"I can't help it," said Nelly, petulantly. "Of course, it's very harrowing, and all that sort of thing; but it one has got into a false position, the sooner one is to get out of it again as soon as possible. And" drawing off the ring, "I am sure Dr. Bruce is too much of a gentleman to decline granting me this favor."

Robert Bruce took back the ring that he had placed so joyfully on her finger not a year ago, and he went away.

"There," said Nelly, with a long breath of relief, "I'm glad it's over with."

"Nelly," said Cora Eldon, in a low voice, "you have done a cruel, wicked thing."

"Nonsense!" retorted Nelly, with a laugh.

Mrs. Falconer Fielding loaded her niece with praises, and invited Mr. Erskine to share their box at the opera the next evening, and at the end of a month Mr. Erskine was quite a familiar visitant at the house.

"Miss Nelly," said he, one day, "I've something very particular to tell you."

Nelly blushed, and looked down, and toyed with the pearl sticks of her fan.

"Anything that concerns you will be sure to interest me," she said.

"Oh, of course," said Mr. Erskine. "Well, I am to be married on Monday to Miss Goldland, the heiress."

And Nelly was forced to put on a smile and say, "she was glad to hear it."

Half an hour afterwards her aunt bustled in, flushed and panting.

"Have you heard the news?" said she. "That fool of a George Erskine has slipped through our fingers after all."

"Yes," said Nelly, faintly, "I know it."

"But that isn't all," added her aunt, fanning herself violently. "Robert Bruce's uncle has returned from Australia, and the shares that old Bruce invested all his money in ten years ago—the shares that people said were only worth so much waste paper—have turned up trumps. He'll be worth a quarter of a million at the very least. Oh, Nelly, Nelly! what a mistake you have made."

"I!" cried Nelly, with a flaming red spot on each cheek. "It's your mistake, aunt. It was your doing all the way through."

"Well, never mind that," retorted Mrs. Fielding, wisely avoiding any discussion on the subject. "You must go to his house, Nelly."

"I?"

"Pshaw! child. Everybody goes to a doctor's, don't they? He'll be glad enough to see you, and only think—a quarter of a million. Why, Nelly, you can lead society if you choose."

Robert Bruce was sitting in his library the next day, when Miss Nellie Fielding entered, all smiles, with her hair done up in the most becoming way, and wearing the blue silk dress that the young doctor had always liked.

"Oh, Robert," said she, "I hope you don't owe me any grudge."

"Any grudge? Not the least in the world," frankly answered Dr. Bruce.

"Because—because," went on Nelly, plunging headlong into the subject, "I have looked into my own heart, and I find that I cannot be happy without you."

"No? That is unfortunate," said Bruce, dryly, "for I am engaged to marry another young lady. She's Miss Cora Eldon."

Nelly Fielding burst into tears.

"You have made your own choice, Nelly," said Dr. Bruce, quietly. "You threw me over because you thought you could do better. It cut me at the time, but I have a nice lesson to be grateful for it.

"Once thrown over I am not to be picked up again at your will and pleasure. Can I get you a glass of water? No? Then perhaps you will excuse me, for I have some patients to see in great hurry."

And Nelly Fielding went home in very low spirits.

"That was the meaning of Cora Eldon's going away?" cried Mrs. Fielding, in great dismay. "The sly, treacherous thing! Why didn't she confide in me?"

Mrs. Fielding probably forgot that she had never given poor Cora Eldon any particular encouragement to confide in her.

And Miss Nelly Fielding found her season in London a dead failure.

STRANGE MONSTERS.—The origin of the fabled unicorn, that horned supporter of the British crown and constitution, is easily accounted for by comparison with the antelope. But the origin of the once widespread belief in such a monster as the mantichorus, with the body of a lion, the tail and sting of a serpent, and the face of a man, with three rows of teeth, is difficult to find. Man's imagination creates for one fairy or fawn, a hundred monsters. Hence the catoblepas, the bird-beast whose look was death, the serpent with a head at each end of its body, the hydra-headed serpent, the gigantic tortoise of the East and scores of others. Belief in some of these is not yet eradicated from among the ignorant peasantry of Eastern Europe. The very old belief that there is a variety of snake which milks the cow is especially firm and widespread, being not unknown in enlightened and educated America.

INK AND PENS.—A simple mode of preventing ink from damaging metallic pens, it is said, is to throw either into the inkstand or the bottle in which the ink is kept, a few nails, broken bits of steel pens (not varnished) or any piece of iron not rusted. The corrosive action of the acid contained in the ink is expended on the iron introduced.

AN Oglethorpe, Ga., boy has invented a cash drawer for which he has refused $10,000.

Important.

Philadelphians arriving in New York via Cortland Street Ferry by taking the 6th Avenue Elevated Train corner Church and Cortland Streets, can reach the Grand Union Hotel in 42d Street opposite Grand Central Depot in twenty minutes, and save $3 Carriage Hire. If enroute to Saratoga or other Summer resorts via Grand Central Depot, all Baggage will be transfered from Hotel to this Depot, FREE. 600 Elegantly furnished rooms $1, and upwards per day. Restaurant the best and cheapest in the City. Families can live better for less money at the Grand Union, than at any other first class hotel in the city.

NOT MORE—NOT LESS.

Calm was the night in that still autumn weather,
  And calmer still and colder were the twain
Who, parting then, might yet have kept together,
  Had pride not stronger been than even pain.

There were no bitter tears, no signs of sorrow,
  No ashes strewn or ashes uttered at the end;
And should they meet—years hence—or on the morrow—
  'T will be with courteous ease as friend meets friend.

Oh! mocking words for those who once loved madly,
  Henceforth to be mere friends—not less—no more—
Deep in each heart a death knell sounded sadly
  For love, deemed deathless, in glad days of yore.

Not more than friends—the voices must not falter,
  Lest broken tones betray a vain regret:
And on the lips the forced smile must not alter
  To show how, 'neath that mask, grief's lines are set.

Let them take heed, lest any word be spoken
  To rouse some ghost from the buried past:
Though the dear ties, that bound them once, are broken,
  A strange spell lingers yet and holds them fast.

Not less than friends—but, ah! the friendship offered
  Seems of such little worth now love is done:
'Tis hard to take the hand thus coldly proffered,
  And feel the tender thrilling touch has gone.

Gone with the day, when just one word was needed
  Those heavy clouds of pride and doubt to lift;
But all in vain love's dying voice had pleaded:
  Now far apart each lonely life must drift.

And she will never know at their next meeting,
  How hard he fought an outward calm to gain;
Nor will he see, beneath the friendly greeting,
  How her true heart still yearns to him through pain.

MEN AND CATS.

WE have often observed that men of superior intellectual abilities, and who have thereby distinguished themselves in the intellectual paths of life, are in general fond of pets, and take pleasure in the society of dumb animals.

Perhaps this propensity may be partly accounted for by the necessity which exists for mental relaxation.

There is an anecdote referred to by some of the fathers concerning the beloved apostle John, which favors this suggestion.

John, so runs the story, when far advanced in years, was in the habit of amusing himself with a partridge which he had made quite tame.

A huntsman, who was a Christian, one day came to him with a bow and arrow on his shoulder, and expressed his surprise at the venerable man finding amusement in that way.

John replied by asking the querist why he did not always keep his bow bent, and received for answer that by so doing the cord would be weakened, and the bow lose its elasticity.

"Then," said the apostle, "you have the reason of my amusing myself thus; the bow must not be always on the stretch, the string must not be always under tension."

Of the great but guilty Mahomet, for instance, it is related that he was so much attached to his cat as to carry her about with him in the sleeve of his robe.

In the "Cloister Life," too, of the Emperor Charles V., by Stirling, we are duly informed that "when, after the Emperor's abdication, he resided at Yuste, he not only amused himself by feeding his pet birds, but, among his domestic treasures, had two small Indian cats."

In a graphic sketch of Sir Walter Scott's study at Edinburgh, which we find in Lockhart's life of the poet, the following passage is quite to our purpose:

"I think I have mentioned all the furniture of the room, except a sort of ladder, low, broad, well-carpeted, and strongly guarded with oaken rails by which he helped himself to books from his higher shelves.

"On the top step of this convenience, Hinse of Hinsefelt, (so called from one of the German Kinder-marchens), a venerable tom cat, fat and sleek, and no longer very locomotive, usually lay, watching the proceedings of his master and Maida (the dog) with an air of dignified equanimity. But when Maida chose to leave the party, then Hinse came down purring from his perch, and mounted guard by the footstool, vice Maida absent upon furlough.

"Whatever discourse might be passing was broken every now and then by some apostrophe to these four-footed friends. He said they understood everything he said to them; and I belive they did understand a great deal of it.

"But, at all events, dogs and cats have, like children, some infallible test for discovering at once who is, and who is not, really fond of his company; and, I venture to say, Scott was never five minutes in any room before the little pets of the family, whether dumb or lisping, had found out his kindness for their generation."

Concerning Sir Walter's great contemporary, Lord Byron, we cannot recollect whether, in his curious menagerie at Newstead Abbey, there were any cats; but his beautiful epitaph upon a Newfoundland dog, buried in that place, fully proves his tender feelings towards animals.

We believe it was Southey—another star in the galaxy of genius which brightened days gone by—who, from the happiness which his fondness for them insured to his cats, called his place Cats' Eden.

A witty letter upon the subject of the feline race occurs in his correspondence, and he needed not on this score to dread the criticism of the Edinburgh Review, for Jeffrey himself, that scourge of the Lake school of poetry, when he traveled, used to carry about with him a favorite tabby in a basket.

The poet Gray, the elaborate elegance of whose verses has been compared to mosaic work, did not, it will be remembered, think the subject of cats beneath his muse, but wrote a pathetic elegy upon a favorite one—the pensive Selina—drowned in a tub of gold fishes.

His affection and regret for the doomed animal are sufficiently evinced by his references to her beauty when he describes the movement of the "conscious tail," and

> "The fair, round face, the snowy beard,
> The velvet of her paws;
> Her coat that with the tortoise vies,
> Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes."

The immortal Cowper, likewise, whose attachment to domestic animals is so well known, that all lovers of poetry are familiar with his pet hares, Tiny and Puss, has not neglected to leave a rhyme in verse of his favorite cat:

> "A poet's cat, sedate and brave,
> As poet well could wish to have."

He also deduced a useful moral from one of her exploits.

Grains of Gold.

Charity is a universal duty.

Custom often overrules reason.

Wise men care not for what they cannot have.

Willows are weak, yet they bind other wood.

Poverty of the soul is worse than that of fortune.

Have not thy cloak to make when it begins to rain.

He has the greatest blind side who thinks he has none.

Better go to heaven in rags than to hell in embroidery.

He has but sorry food that feeds upon the faults of others.

He has riches enough who needs neither borrow nor flatter.

If you trust before you try, you may repent before you die.

Disputations leave truth in the middle and party at both ends.

Use every man after his desert, and who should 'scape whipping?

A good reputation is like an icicle—if it once melts, that's the end of it.

It is impossible to be a hero in anything unless one is first a hero in faith.

There is nothing so kindly as kindness; and there is nothing so royal as truth.

Hypocrites hide their defects with so much care that their hearts are poisoned by them.

'Tis better that a man's own works than that another man's words should praise him.

There is in hypocrisy as much folly as vice; it is as easy to be honest as to appear so.

You may take the greatest trouble and by turning it around find joy on the other side.

Good taste rejects excessive nicety; it treats little things as little things, and is not hurt by them.

There is no contending with necessity, and we should be very tender how we censure those that submit to it.

Excess of ceremony was always the companion of weak minds; it is a plant that will never grow in a strong soil.

Every day is a little life, and our whole life is but a day repeated. Therefore, live every day as if it would be the last.

Good manners is the art of making those people easy with whom we converse. Whoever makes the fewest persons uneasy is the best bred.

There are a great many duties that cannot wait. Unless they are done the moment they present themselves, it is not worth while to do them at all.

Femininities.

Woman is a miracle of divine contradictions.

Nature meant to make woman her masterpiece.

Where men are well used, they'll frequent there.

Whoever has learned to love, has learned to be silent.

Love is better than spectacles to make everything seem great.

A Boston girl never speaks of the "naked truth." She refers to it as "truth divested of apparel."

Women and girls have deposits in the Massachusetts savings banks to the amount of $117,023,239—nearly one-half of the total deposits.

Mrs. E. M. King, Secretary of the National Dress Association in England, is in Montreal, preaching the doctrine of vests and trousers for women.

A Newport belle married the man who rescued her from drowning. This should be a warning for young men to keep away from the seashore.

A Boston woman notifies train boys, through the press, that if they throw copies of Ingersoll's lectures in her lap, she will throw them out of the window.

A young woman in Kansas, to spite her father, has not spoken in several weeks. If she could see the old man out behind the barn chuckling to himself, she'd probably start again.

A Camden youth who was shaken by the earthquake in the afternoon, and then shook by his best girl in the evening, says he didn't mind the former, but was all broken up by the latter.

A knowledge of botany seems to be of no possible use in too much of the decorative art now, as flowers are conventionalized out of recognition, and the leaves belong to no clime under the sun.

When a girl begins to take an interest in the condition of a young man's wardrobe, it is a sign that they are engaged. When she loses all interest in it, it is a sign that they have parted, or are married.

In at least one New York establishment women are employed as gold beaters. The proprietors say that what they lack in physical strength they make up in carefulness and delicacy of workmanship.

A sweet temper has a soothing influence over the mind of the whole family. When it is found in the wife and mother, you observe kindness and love predominating over the natural feelings of a bad heart.

"Yes," sighed Amelia, "before marriage George professed to be willing to die for me, and now he won't even get his life insured in my favor." And the girl burst into a fashionable flood of tears.

"I never saw such a woman in all my life," said Enos: "you are never satisfied with anything." "People who knew the man I took for a husband," replied Mrs. B., "thought I was very easily satisfied."

The words "papa" and "mamma" have been so appropriated by the would-be genteel that they are now anything but fashionable in good society, and the good old terms of father and mother sound much better.

"John, when you die, would you like to be cremated?" "No, Jane; no cremation for your fond husband. Put me on ice. I've had a hot enough time of it when alive." His wife has not sewed on a button for him since.

"Little brown jugs" of tiny dimensions, containing a drop or two of choice perfumery, are worn as chatelaines. They are made of common clay, but have good wired stoppers. "Little Brown Jug, How I Love Thee," is the motto.

A New York paper notes that beehives have taken the place of costly plants as window ornaments in some of the fashionable Murray Hill mansions, and wonders how the new style will strike the passer-by when it becomes general.

"When I say," said a gallant old bachelor to a lady—"when I say that a woman's heart is like a lithographer's stone, I do not mean that she is unfeeling, but that what is once impressed on her sensitive heart is not easily rubbed out."

Mrs. Jennings, a very old lady living near Athens, Ga., lately had a couple of bushels of wheat of different kinds that she wanted to save for seed. The two bushels got mixed together accidentally, and she separated it by picking it out a grain at a time.

A St. Louis man, twenty-five years old, is the victim of a queer mania. He firmly believes that he is seventy years old. There are some equally queer cases in this city, the victims being women who are seventy years old, yet firmly believe they are twenty-five.

"So hot water is a great cure, is it? Well, I shan't let any of my boarders get sick for want of that medicine. Just put another gallon of water in that oyster soup, Maria; and, come to think of it, I guess you had better take out that oyster now—it might be too rich."

"How are you enjoying yourself, Esmeralda?" "I never enjoyed myself so much as at this very moment. It is so delightful to be alone—absolutely alone, in perfect solitude by the seaside." He told his friends what she said, and now he is known as "Perfect Solitude."

Moral beauty is the basis of all true beauty. This foundation is sometimes covered and veiled in nature; art brings out and gives it more transparent forms. It is here that art, when it knows well its powers and resources, engages in a struggle with nature in which it may have the advantage.

Arabella—"Here he is, just where he's been for weeks. Why doesn't he speak out? I'm sure I encourage him enough." George—"Here she is, as usual, wearing a costume which cost more money than I could make in six months. How can I ask her to marry me, as it would be impossible for me to support her in the extravagant style in which she now lives?"

News Notes.

The Bavarians are making a new beer from rice.

Deseronto, Canada, is lighted by gas made out of sawdust.

A Geneva organ-grinder has left a fortune of $61,000 to his heirs.

Pop corn is placarded in the Crystal Palace as "sold to the nobility."

The entire city of Cumberland, Md., is soon to be lighted by electricity.

German physicians are claimed by many to be the most skilful in the world.

The five-cent piece is the smallest coin (in value) in circulation in New Orleans.

The French originated the industrial exhibition; the first was held in Paris in 1798.

The school teachers of Vermont are prohibited by law from using tobacco in any form.

Since the war over six hundred colored Baptist churches have been established in Texas alone.

Over fifty thousand postoffices are required to handle the mail matter of the United States.

The use of chicken-bone drainage tubes is among the latest devices for mercifully healing wounds.

A gun weighing 312,000 pounds has been successfully cast at South Boston, Mass., for this government.

The British Admiralty has decided that colored men cannot enter the navy without special permission.

In the City of Mexico, says a correspondent, street cars are used for conveying the dead to the cemeteries.

Iowa has a new law under which the keeper of a disreputable house can be sent to prison for five years.

Seventy-nine fires have been caused in New York city during twelve years by rats and mice nibbling matches.

Three thousand members of the Smith family were present at their annual reunion at Penpack, N. J., recently.

English farmers, it is said, now offer six cents a dozen for sparrows heads, and the same price a dozen for their eggs.

Forty years ago there was not a telegraph office in existence. To-day the number is 31,340. Verily, the world moves.

In Paris no newsboy can be employed to sell papers except by special official permission in of the Prefecture of Police.

Prof. Haeckel, the great German naturalist, has finished the dissection of 3,000 eggs as his latest contribution to science.

The making of photographs in this country alone consumes annually about forty tons of silver and three tons of gold.

Thirty-eight million barrels of petroleum are stored in tanks in this State—enough to make a mile square and ten feet deep.

Trenton, N. J., is to have a crematory. A kiln which has been used for firing decorated china will be converted to the purpose.

Pueblo, Col., has an effective way of ridding the city of unlicensed dogs. The city council pay the policemen one dollar for every one they kill.

An Atlanta, Ga., paper says that the most wonderful cures of dyspepsia are being made around Athens by taking a spoonful of fine sand after each meal.

At the Free Methodist meeting house in Saratoga a small company of women pray every afternoon for the reform of the frivolous summer residents.

During the last fiscal year the number of passengers carried on all the railroads in the country was equal to six times the population of the United States.

A Michigan justice of the peace advertises: "Marriage ceremonies performed at all hours of the day or night. Knots tied after midnight fifty per cent. extra."

Mrs. Skidmore, of New York, is 120 years old, has had five husbands, has smoked the same pipe for fifty-five years, and was once kissed by George Washington.

Discussing the suicide of animals, a London paper declares that the dragon fly, "held securely by the wings, curls its tail upward to its mouth and viciously chews itself to pulp."

A gang of burglars on Staten Island appointed two of their number to serenade the inmates of a well-furnished house, while the others broke in at the back and robbed the premises.

A young man in Hillsdale, N. Y., has contracted to work seven years for a farmer of that place in consideration of obtaining the latter's daughter for a wife at the end of that period.

A bill is now before the Brazilian Parliament declaring all slaves of sixty years old free, and providing for the emancipation by the State at a tariff fixed according to the age of those younger.

Sixteen black snakes aggregating sixty feet in length, were killed by Frank Rossiter, of Thomaston, Conn., who stumped his toe and fell into a pile of rocks, among the hissing, wriggling mass.

Passes given to country papers by railroad companies are bought and sold freely. One company recently issued in New York city 40 passes in one day, to one man, knowing that he would sell them, as he did.

Alonzo Moore, of Cumberland, this State, put on an old pair of summer trousers, and found the right pocket unusually heavy. He put in his hand and drew out a black snake three feet long. Then Mr. Moore danced a hornpipe and the snake executed a glide.

The Spy's Reward.

BY MAGGIE BROWNE.

"MY dear," said Miss Patty Pry, "I'm morally certain that something is wrong!"

Little Mrs. Wrinkfield looked up, and began to flutter all over like a frightened bird.

"Something wrong?" she repeated. "Oh, Miss Patty, what can possibly be wrong!"

Mrs. Wrinkfield was a pretty blonde, with great, surprised-looking blue eyes, a deprecating expression of face, and a voice soft and sweet.

Miss Patty Pry was a tall, grenadier-like female, with a suspicion of a beard, high cheek-bones, and elbows that wore holes through all her dresses, so sharp and uncompromising were they.

"My dear," said Miss Patty, lowering her voice to a husky whisper, "it looks suspicious. Wrinkfield is a great deal too willing for you to go home and spend the night with your mother."

"He thought it would be a pleasant little change for me," asserted Mrs. Wrinkfield, eagerly.

"Exactly," snarled Miss Patty. "And it'll be a pleasant little change for him too."

"I don't understand you," said Mrs. Wrinkfield, with a bewildered look.

"Oh, you little goose," cried Miss Patty. "He's going to give a bachelor party. He means to invite his friends and turn your house inside out. That's his idea, you may depend upon it.

"I know for a positive certainty, that Dollahee has received an order for a hundred oysters, a dozen of champagne, and a tureen of lobster salad. For to-night, my dear.

"I wondered who it could possibly be from, and now I know. And that, my dear," with fearful emphasis, "explains your husband's kind willingness to let you go to your mother's for the night. Ah—h—h! They are all alike, these men."

Mrs. Wrinkfield burst into tears.

"I won't go," she cried, "I'll stay at home."

"Don't do that, my dear," said Miss Pry; "pack your bag and go with the baby. Who knows when you may again have an opportunity? And I make it my business to watch Wrinkfield."

"But how?" questioned the perplexed young wife.

"Just give me the key of the back stairway door," said Miss Pry. "I'll secrete myself in the china closet that opens out of the dining-room. I'll listen. I'll find out the secrets of 'em! And I'll tell you every single word I hear!"

"But—but would that be honorable?" hesitated Mrs. Wrinkfield.

"Honorable," dolefully repeated Miss Pry; "My poor dear, don't you know that us women must avail ourselves of every possible means of keeping even with those tyrants the men?"

"I suppose so," said Mrs. Wrinkfield, restlessly twining and intertwining her fingers.

"But I never could have believed that Charlie would treat me so."

"They're all alike," said Miss Pry, "and we single women are a deal the best off. I wouldn't marry, not if forty men were to go down on their knees to me at once. No, indeed! I value my own independence a deal too much for that!"

And Miss Patty tossed her head with a sniff, half of triumph, half of disdain.

Mrs. Wrinkfield gave her the key.

She knew she was a soft-hearted, easily deluded little thing, and she had a great respect for Miss Patty Pry's discrimination and judgment.

But her conscience pricked her a little when Wrinkfield took her to the station, and bought oranges for the baby and little Minnie.

She would have confessed all if Miss Patty had not been there to see her off.

"I shall count every moment until you come back, Mary," said Wrinkfield, with a farewell kiss.

"Ah—h—h! the deceiver!" hissed Miss Pry, on the other side.

"Because you know," added the unconscious Benedict, "it's so lonely for a fellow to sit down to tea with you and the minikins gone."

"And oysters and champagne," hysterically giggled Miss Pry, so close to Mrs. Wrinkfield's face that every word seemed to tickle her ear-drums. "Oh, yes, dreadfully lonely. Ha! ha! ha!"

And so Mrs. Wrinkfield set off on her ten-mile journey.

Miss Pry hurried back, and letting herself in on the sly into the back staircase door, crept up into the dining-room, and ensconced herself comfortably in the china closet.

"I shan't be disturbed. And I shall have an opportunity to convince Mary Wrinkfield that her husband is a villain."

Which possibility gave Miss Patty Pry a good deal of solid satisfaction, considering what a devout Christian she had always professed to be.

"I'm early," said she to herself, as the clock in the adjoining room struck four. "I shall have a long time to wait. But it wouldn't do to risk arriving too late. It never does to risk anything in this world."

At six Mr. Wrinkfield came home to his tea, and drank it alone; Miss Pry had to recede into a most uncomfortable angle to avoid being discovered by Barbara, the deft little maid, as she tripped to and fro with the table furniture.

"But it won't be for long," thought Miss Patty Pry. "The guests will soon begin to arrive."

Barbara put coal on the fire, hung up the hearth-brush, and withdrew.

Mr. Wrinkfield lighted his cigar and began to smoke and read, with his slippered foot on the fender.

Miss Pry regarded him intently through the crack of the door.

"Isn't he going to change his coat, or dress himself up?" she asked herself. "Upon my word, he's taking matters very coolly."

Seven o'clock struck—eight o'clock—nine o'clock—ten o'clock, and still no company arrived.

Miss Pry began to fidget fearfully in her cramped-up little den, but still Mr. Wrinkfield read composedly on, turning leaf after leaf, with a serenity which was aggravating in the highest degree to Miss Patty Pry.

Eleven!

Mr. Wrinkfield rose with a prodigious yawn, turned down the gas and locked the china-closet door on the outside.

Then he went upstairs, thinking that the silver was quite safe in the closet, and little dreaming of the other valuable that was incarcerated there.

The next morning, just as Mr. Wrinkfield was taking in the morning paper, little Barbara came to him.

"Oh, sir," said she, "I think there's burglars in the china-closet. Such a groaning and shrieking as there is there."

"But it's locked," said Mr. Wrinkfield. "And I've got the key in my pocket."

"Then they're locked in, sir," said little Barbara, as pale as a sheet. "Oh, sir, the noise is perfectly awful. Won't you please come and listen for yourself, sir?"

Mr. Wrinkfield got a revolver and the kitchen poker, and thus armed, proceeded to unlock the closet.

There, crouched up in a corner, with a pocket-handkerchief pressed to her face, sat Miss Patty Pry, the victim of a sharp attack of neuralgia in the jaw bone.

"Hallo!" shouted Mr. Wrinkfield, scarcely able to believe his own eyes. "Miss Pry."

"I was locked in by mistake," said Miss Patty, between the jerks of pain. "Please let me out!"

At the same moment there was a turmoil on the stairs—Mrs. Wrinkfield and the babies, returning by early train.

The little wife flew into her husband's arms.

"Dear Charles," she sobbed, "I couldn't sleep for thinking I'd set spies on you. And I'll never, never do it again."

"There's been nobody here but rats and mice and black beetles," said Miss Patty, behind her pocket-handkerchief. "And if I'd known you were such a weak, poor-spirited thing, Mary Wrinkfield, I would never have offered to help you."

"I want no more of your help," said Mrs. Wrinkfield, with a spark of courage. "Get a husband of your own if you want to play the spy and eavesdropper."

Miss Patty Pry went home in a rage, and didn't speak to Mrs. Wrinkfield for three weeks.

"To be sure," said she, "Mr. Wrinkfield didn't give a bachelor's supper that night, but it wasn't my fault. And for Mary to be so ungrateful, too, after the neuralgia I got in that damp closet, looking after her concerns."

While Mr. Wrinkfield's verdict is—"Served her right; she got a spy's reward."

A SHREWD SUITOR.—Despotic papa declared that Brown should not marry his charming Emily—heiress of eight thousand a year—unless he was wealthy.

"What is your fortune, sir?" he asked, magisterially.

"Well, I don't exactly know," said Brown, who was as poor as a church mouse; "but let your daughter become my wife, and I promise that she shall have endless gold."

"Endless gold is rather an exaggeration, eh?" remarked papa.

"Scarcely in my case," said Brown, "as my wife and I, be as extravagant as we might, should never be able to get through it."

"Are you telling me the truth?"

"The truth, I vow it!"

"Then take her, my boy," said papa, grasping Brown's hand; "and happy am I that my child has been saved from the clutches of rogues and fortune-hunters."

Well, they were married, and Brown made the money fly at such a rate that when his wife's milliner's bill came in he was obliged to confess himself stumped.

Mrs. Brown immediately sent for her papa.

"What's this?" said papa. "Stumped? What do you mean, sir? Where's the endless gold you promised, eh?"

"I've kept my promise," answered Brown. "I gave your daughter endless gold when I married her—a wedding-ring. And, my dear," added Brown, turning to his wife, "do you think that both of us could ever get through anything which only just fits one of those taper fingers?"

Papa looked as if he was going to have a fit, but a timely remark of his daughter's probably averted the catastrophe.

"Well, papa," she said, "there's still one thing in our favor. No one can say that I've got an idiot for a husband."

So the storm blew over; and now Brown and his wife, though they do have to manage on eight thousand a year, are the happiest couple in the two hemispheres. Still, the bridegroom admits that his was rather a risky experiment.

A GOOD beginning is half the work.

THE SEASON'S WANE.

He's newly come back from a summer resort,
Yet he seems quite sad and uneasy;
Mayhap 'tis he sorrows his stay was so short
By the breakers so bracing and breezy.

Or mayhap he mourns o'er the fond glance and smile
Of the maids that he loved to join nightly,
And with them in dance the glad hours beguile—
I'll ask if I've hit the facts rightly.

"These pleasures," said he, 'twixt a moan and a sigh,
"I miss them, and long for them partly;
I loved the fair ladies, the cool sea and sky,
But one thing has puzzled me smartly.

"In walking by moonlight, in the Lancers fair set,
Or rambling across the green lawn,
The thought never left me—'twas how I could get
My last winter's clothes out of pawn."

—WM. MACKINTOSH.

Humorous.

Relics of Burns—Scars.

Made of awl-work—Shoes.

The balance of trade—Scales.

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and Prostration, from over-work or other causes. $1 per vial, or 5 vials and large vial powder, for $5. Sold by Druggists, or sent postpaid on receipt of price. Address, Humphreys' Homeopathic Medicine Co., 109 Fulton St., New York.

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New Publications.

A movement most worthy of support and success is that started in New York by the "Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language and Literature." As the name implies the purpose of the organization, is to keep alive, in those of Irish blood, descent, and sympathies, here and elsewhere, a love for, and study of the old language of Erin. They have just issued a highly interesting and learned pamphlet on the subject by Prof. F. L. O. Roehrig of Cornell University which will be sent on receipt of ten cents to any address. This pamphlet will serve to show the high place the study of this language takes in the opinion of learned men, and its value in properly understanding history and philology. Other books pertaining to the matter are also issued by the Society among which we may mention, Joyce's Irish Grammar. This work while small in compass seems to be thorough in its contents, and for those intending to enter upon a study of the old Gaelic tongue, will prove satisfactory in more ways than one. Price 25 cents. Published at the office of the Society 114 East Thirteenth St., New York, where any additional information may be attained.

MAGAZINES.

Those who are interested in the flower garden will find *Vick's Floral Monthly* a very treasure of hints and general information. The September number just issued fully keeps up the high character of this excellent magazine. James Vick, Publisher, Rochester, N. Y. Price $1.25 per year.

The September *Manhattan* is strong in travel papers, treating of places widely separated. A Russian lady, in The Misericordia of Florence, gives an historical and descriptive account, with the aid of illustrations, of that famous society, now five centuries old. Other illustrated articles are The Chalice Bearers, a poem, by Elizabeth S. McChesney; A Corner of the Gulf of Mexico, by Robert S. Day; and the anonymous novel Trajan. David Ker tells how it looks On a Siamese Pagoda; Ernest Ingersoll describes a Russian settlement in A California Acadia, and Kate Field concludes her clever Diary in London. A sterling literary paper is on Balzac and the Literary Circles of His time, by James Lane Allen. Henry F. Randolph discusses the propriety of The Grave-Diggers' Scene in Hamlet. There are two stories—Nance, by Hope Ledyard, and Col. Judson of Alabama. There is an abundance of poetry, and the several departments are well filled. Terms $3 a year. Published, Temple Court, New York.

Lippincott's Magazine for September is readable and entertaining throughout. There are two sketches of travel suitable for the occasion—A summer Trip to Alaska, by James A. Harrison, and Gossip from the English Lakes, by Amelia Barr. The second installment of John Coleman's Personal Reminiscences of Charles Reade, is larger than the first. The American of the Future, by Edward C. Bruce, is a thoughtful but by no means purely speculative study. An article on Delacroix and Shakespeare, by Theodore Child, shows how the greatest of French painters drew constant inspiration from the works of the English dramatist, Bohemian Antipodes, by Margaret Bertha Wright, is an amusing account of two contrasted social gatherings of London and Paris. Three Chapters of Miss Tincknor's New serial, Aurora, ar given in this number, with a beautiful frontispiece by an Italian artist Adriano Bonifazi. A week in Killarney, by the Duchess, is also continued and there are short stories by Celia P. Wootley and Chas. Dunning, poems by Helen Gray Cone and James Lane Allen, and the usual variety of good things in the editorial departments.

The September *Century* is a strong rival to the August midsummer number, both in its literary and pictoral features. The frontispiece illustrates Thomas A. Janvier's romantic story of Pancha. The other short story is a humorous dialect sketch of Southern life entitled The Brief Embarrassment of Mr. Iverson Blount, by Richard Malcolm Johnson. Charles G. Leland's Legends of the Passamoquoddy, with Illustrations drawn on birch bark by a Quadi Indian, have the interest of fiction as well as a value to students of folk-lore. Henry James' two-part story, A New England Winter, is concluded; H. H. Boyesen's serial is continued, and Mr. Cable's will be concluded in the next number. The leading illustrated articles are From Coventry to Chester on Wheels, recounting a tricycle trip made in England by Joseph Pennell, the artist; On the Track of Ulysses, by W. J. Stillman; and The New Astronomy, by Prof. S. P. Langley. Other important papers are A Tropical Hurricane, in Costa Rica, by Horace D. Warner; Emile Littre, with full-page portrait; The Foreign Elements in our Population, by Joseph Edgar Chamberlin; and The Late Dr. Dorner and The New Theology. The departments—Topics of the Time; Open Letters, and Brie-a-Brac, will likewise be found most enjoyable. The Century Co., Publishers, New York.

THE scarcity of gentlemen at a neighboring summer resort was so apparent that a Boston lady telegraphed to her husband: "George, bring down a lot of beaus for the hop this evening." Thanks to the telegraph manipulator, George arrived with a "pot of beans."

Headaches and biliousness are promptly cured by the use of Ayer's Cathartic, sugar-coated Pills.

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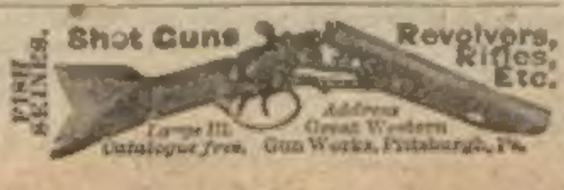

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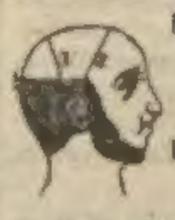

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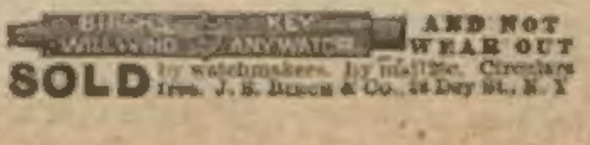

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Ladies' Department.

FASHION CHAT.

THE black lace dress is becoming classical. Scarcely a well-dressed woman but has one. Were it a style less intrinsically beautiful, this might become monotonous

But, as a matter of fact, however many of these toilets one may have seen, one never regrets seeing one more, provided it is at all well made.

There is nothing more sure to be becoming, whatever the individual type; and some dressmakers know how to serve up the same dish with a great, many different sauces.

The black lace dress over red gets this new rendering. For instance: Skirt of "coquelicot" faille, laid in wide side plaits across the back, but plain in front; three flounces of deep black lace veil this front and have knots of red ribbons thrown upon each, in the centre; at the foot, in front, a plaited-out ruche of red over a narrow plaiting of lace, this latter carried, like a baleyeuse, all around the skirt.

An overdress of lace is drawn back in paniers from the tablier, is moderately long in the back, rounded on the edge and caught up in the centre in short puffs, while it forms a species of butterfly bow brought up on the point of the peaked bodice.

This bodice is of lace over red, very short all around and softened in the front by a puffy lace plastron, shirred at the throat and at the waist; the standing collar of lace over over silk is slightly cut downwards, back and front.

On the left shoulder is set a butterfly knot of lace and ribbon; a knot of ribbon with long ends is fastened against the overdress on the right side; the elbow sleeves are lined with red and finished with a deep frill of lace, caught up on the inside of the arm against the sleeve and hanging loose on the outside.

For a lady of more mature years black lace dresses are all very handsome over purple; say with three lace flounces trimming the silk skirt and a tiny purple silk plaiting showing underneath, a rounded tablier of piece lace with a flounce all around, and a full puffed back which is brought up against the point of the bodice and there fastened with a large rosette of lace; the bodice may be cut open slightly at the neck and have sleeves finished above the wrist by purple knots of ribbon. A trained toilet of black lace is in every respect a most desirable and useful possession.

It is handsome enough for almost every occasion; and especially lovely for a dinner dress. Then it can always be changed later into a short costume by using it over a colored silk, perhaps; or in various ways, and no fabric can be so easily manipulated, to give the aspect of a totally new dress.

Speaking of making over, the following suggestion is worth taking note of: Flounces that are not too narrow when run together with bands of velvet put across to conceal the joinings will make a very pretty plaited front after a prevailing style.

A black silk might be revamped in this wise, using those parts most new for the back of the skirt, and for a little flouncing to run upon the foot all around, and buying new goods, perhaps, for a pointed bodice with a "casaque" back, falling in straight plaits to the bottom of the underskirt. There may be a plaited plastron on the front, with straps of velvet taken across it, and a velvet collar and velvet cuffs, to correspond with the cross bands of velvet on the plaited tablier.

The same idea can be carried out for wool dresses also. We have known it to be recently done with a costume of pistachio green cashmere.

New velvet was bought of the shade known as "iron rust." The front of the skirt, the flounces having been previously pressed out carefully, was plaited as above described.

This deep plaiting was joined to a flounce a quarter of a yard in depth which passed across the back of the skirts. The puffed drapery fell to the top of the flounce.

The bodice was pointed front and back, with the centre seam of the latter left open a few inches up from the edge. The fronts had small draperies of the cashmere shirred at the neck and waist, and separated slightly to show a small vest of iron rust velvet in the centre.

Minor variations in the making can be introduced according to the stuff at one's disposal.

A beautiful model for a carriage or visiting dress is the following: Skirt front of silver gray brocade; small box-plaiting of changeable gray taffeta showing at the foot all around; rounded panier draperies of changeable taffeta and long straight plaited back of the same touching the hem of the underdress; peaked bodice of taffeta, with a plaited postillion; two full hollow plaits, lined with taffeta and interlined with crinoline to make them stand out stiffly; basques very short over the hips; plastron of brocade on the front, and six straps of taffeta crossing the same on the bias, the last, near the peak, scarcely an inch in length; sleeves finished with a small flaring revers, slit open on the inside of the arm.

To go with this costume there may be a capote of gray tulle embroidered in silver, with gray velvet strings, a puff of velvet upon the brim and a bunch of pink peach blossoms and light gray aigrette standing boldly upward in the front.

Walking suits for the early autumn now occupy the thoughts of many women. Hence we will make a note of a few. One is of brown velveteen and brocaded wool goods.

It has a plain skirt of brown velveteen; a long overdress of Suede wool, brocaded with dark brown figures, is carried up high on the left side; a smooth, plain bodice of velveteen and velvet, high at the throat and with long sleeves, has eyes fastened to it near the edges at frequent intervals, whereon the flat drapery of the overdress is hooked; a band of velvet some three inches in width passes low over the hips and conceals the line where the tunic and bodice meet; in the front it is clasped with a long steel buckle.

For the street a small wrap of brocaded wool goods is added; it is shaped like a shoulder cape behind and reaches to the waist line; a lining of brown surah is put throughout it; it has one seam down the middle of the back; there is some fullness over the shoulders and the fronts are also quite full, and are crossed at the waist line under a flowing knot of brown velvet ribbon; the bodice underneath shows for a few inches at the neck.

The hat may be of Suede straw, with lining and roules of brown velvet and a bunch of Suede tips intermingled with brown velvet knots in front.

A charming suit of blue cloth is made with a plaited flounce mounted on a skirt-top of alpaca or silesia, and four rows of silver braid run upon the flounce three inches up from the hem.

The back drapery falls in straight plaits—again the "casaque" back; on the right side, this drapery is joined to the tunic, which is likewise trimmed with four rows of silver braid, and which falls quite plain and smooth and almost to the foot of the bottom flounce on this side; on the left it is drawn up and back very slightly.

The basque, close fitting behind, and with a couple of hollow plaits in the postillion, opens in the front, over a cloth vest, cut away at the bottom in little points, and fastened with a row of small silver buttons.

Down the fronts of the little jackett, as they open over the vest, are revers of cloth braided with silver; the cuffs are covered with the same braiding, and also the high officer collar.

Ladies who prefer the strictly English style of cloth suit will have pale gray cloth, or cloth of the brownish gray and very popular shade christened "elephant's breath," made with an extremely long overdress raised slightly from a narrow plaiting bordering the foundation skirt, and caught into one or two puffs high in the back, from thence hanging straight, in the way now so much approved and so pretty.

The tailors who turn out these semi-masculine and wholly severe suits for which the New York society girl displays so great a fondness, will again use cheviots, in new mixtures, this Autumn.

And the most correct way of making them still seems to be with accordion-plaited skirt, simple drapery, and Norfolk jacket; though certainly that type is not new.

With costumes of this persuasion some young ladies are showing a tendency to wear plain sailor hats of felt similar in shape to the rough and ready straws that have been popular during the summer.

Fireside Chat.

ARTISTIC BAGATELLES.

WE all know what a difference it makes to the look of a house when there is a mistress who possesses taste at the head of affairs—what a cheery air the rooms assume, how dark corners are brightened up with a bracket holding rare bits of old Dresden, how gracefully the curtains are brought back, how conveniently the chairs are arranged for a confidential chat, albeit with seeming carelessness, how the natty work-table suggests useful occupation denuded of its ugliness; how lightly the flowers are arranged, and with what consummate art the variously colored blossoms are juxtaposed so that each retains its full value whilst enhancing the brilliance of its neighbors.

And how conspicuous by its absence is that "monotony" which is "the bane of beauty," that uncomfortable order, that puritanical primness which pervades the air and creeps into every nook and corner of the dwellings of some well-intentioned persons.

But with all the good will in the world we cannot be always inventing novel knick-knacks for ourselves; so, for the sake of those of our readers who are out of the way of seeing such things, we intend to describe a few, which, scattered about a room, will aid in giving it a picturesque appearance.

It seems as if there could scarcely be a novelty in regard to Japanese fans, and yet we find them being decorated in various styles and employed for various purposes. They can be made up as wall pockets in the following manner:

The leaf is first covered tightly over with satin, the pocket, made of plush to match, is box-plaited and sewn on, a heading being left both at the top and at the bottom.

Silk balls hang from the lower edge, and the handle can be wound round with cords finished off with tassels.

Another mode of utilizing these fans is to decorate them with natural flowers for ladies to carry in their hands at balls or at the theatre.

The fan leaf is covered entirely over with silver leaf, and a spray of Gloire de Dijon roses and maidenhair fern, which tapers off at the end, is carried half round it.

On the remaining uncovered space a tropical bird is fixed, its blue plumage contrasting well with the silver leaf and the roses; loops of ribbon are placed at the junction of the handle with the fan.

Better than silvering the fan, in our opinion, would be the covering of it with silk or satin, to match the costume.

These are intended for ladies' use, but we see no objection to their employment for room decorations.

Wooden sabots are filled with flowers to hang on a wall; why, then, should not the fan, ornamented with natural flowers, be also pressed into the service?

Novelties in articles for the writing-table are always in demand. Here is one that will be new to many.

The case is of leather or silk, and on it is pasted a sheet of writing paper, the right-hand corner of the front page being turned back, just to show that it is double, and to avoid the stiff look which is ruinous to decorative art.

On the paper there is some writing, and on the top left-hand corner there is a bird and some foliage; but better still, we think, would be the owner's monogram done in colors.

The representation of a glass ink bottle, with a pen in it, fills the right-hand lower corner of the blotting case.

Altogether, it is a clever idea which is worth knowing, for it could be carried out in many ways without the meaning of the decoration being lost sight of.

Cardboard mounts for photographs can be embellished with a figure drawing in water-colors.

A pleasing fancy would be to fill the photo space with a view, say, of some picturesque part of Normandy, and to sketch a Normandy peasant girl on the mount.

The figure occupies the left-hand side of the card, and is partially hidden behind the photo; some foliage, or a bit of an old wall, helps to fill up the remaining space and does away with formality of treatment.

The examples we have seen were scarcely to our taste.

We suppose, from the oval shape of the photo space, they were intended for portraits; if so, the water-color drawing of a figure would certainly not be in good form, but it is easy enough, when once we have an idea suggested to us, to improve upon it.

Photographic albums can be decorated with a multiplicity of subjects. A new method is to border the pages with colored specimens of porcelain, carrying out the design of each page in one class of ware.

It may at first be supposed that there would be some monotony inseparable from this style, but when we consider the many sorts of porcelain there are, and the many articles that are manufactured in each, we find our fears are groundless.

Take, for example, Japanese ware alone; what innumerable subjects, what diversities of form and of color are open to the artist who transfers them to paper.

What a combination of indescribable hues he can bring together, wherewith he can secure any tone he desires.

If intended as presents, albums may be beautified with drawings, or pen-and-ink sketches, to suit the individual taste of the recipient.

Thus a series of hunting scenes will be of interest to many men, boating and fishing sketches to others.

To men in the army, episodes of the battle-field are appropriate, and they need only deal with the brighter side of war.

But no one should undertake such work who cannot do it well.

An intimate knowledge of figure and animal drawing is indispensable, unless, indeed, copies are resorted to, in which case anyone who can color can turn out a creditable piece of decoration.

The book should be devoted solely to male portraits, and principally to those of men connected with the service.

Very pretty sachets consist of small squares of contrasting colors, such as pale pink and pale blue. Crossway stripes of silk or satin lined with muslin, are plaited so as to form alternate squares of two colors.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Correspondence.

MAID.—There could not possibly be any objection to your using your sister's wreath. On the contrary, we think you are a sensible girl to do so.

STUBBS.—Write to Osgood & Co., Publishers, Boston. (2) Peterson & Bros., of this city, will send the book in paper covers. It will cost you 75 cents.

H.—The lady should see a doctor. If she is fit to be married perform your part of the contract manfully. You and she are better able to settle this matter than anybody else in the world. Take her to your heart and home, and be happy.

ELLA.—The young man shows some partiality to you, to be sure, but nothing to justify you in falling so violently in love with him. A young lady should not accept valuable presents from a young man to whom she is not engaged.

F. R. S.—There are some hundreds of such associations in this city. You do not say which you want to know of. Write to the "Building Association Journal" of this city. It will give you the needed information. Our opinion of them is, they are a very valuable institution.

STARIOVA.—(1) Money so sent is at the risk of the sender. Registation makes tracing an easier matter. (2) If there was nothing left you might offer the young man some, but it would be entirely unnecessary, if more was to be had. (3. We never gave any testimonial, and cannot say further about them.

GEO. P.—We never heard of him or his book, and do not know where either can be found. As a rule it is best to avoid such people and such publications. They have wrecked or made wretched many happy lives. If you have any need of information to be gained from such sources, you can get it better and cheaper by consulting a good doctor.

HOPEFUL.—No doubt board and lodging in a respectable family could be obtained; but it would be much more expensive to live here than in the country. A far smaller sum would suffice where you now are. We would rather urge a determined effort to make the work done exceptionally good, so that a better class of work may be secured without change of residence.

A. B. C.—Muscular exercise will often do much to help in cases of "mental depression," but to be useful it must be voluntary and self-suggested. The energy that really helps must come from the brain or mind. If it is your will—resolutely—to be well, you will. This is what some people mean by being "cured by faith." Where there is faith there is generally power of recovery.

LEON.—A line of conduct such as you describe is not consistent with true and constant affection. You seem to have done all that you could do consistently with self-respect, and his carrying off his letters seems to have been a part of his plan to end the correspondence. One who is capable of this would have disappointed you sooner or later. Better now than after marriage.

SCHOOL-GIRL.—The margin is left there, more particularly in legal paper, that the recipient may make such notes of reference or memoranda, as the letter requires. 2 The natural sciences are Zoology Botany, Anthropology, or whatever is based upon physical nature. 3 Change the sentence so that it may read: "It is base to deceive children." You will then see the grammatical relation of the parts.

M. E. Z.—Were we to attempt to describe the orange botanically you certainly would not be able to know it if you met it. It belongs to the genius citrus or citron, and order aurantiaceæ. Botany has a language of its own somewhat difficult to understand without hard study. (2) Write to Osgood & Co., Publishers, Boston, Mass., stating what you want. (3) They laugh because it is a natural way of expressing an emotion of the mind, just as winking is a natural function of the body.

READER.—We should not advise you to attempt to alter the color of your hair; whatever the natural color is, it generally goes better with the complexion than any artificial color. (2) We have heard of such things in the old days of ignorance and superstition, but happily one no longer believes in them. (2) It is better, if you have been talked of, by any person fond of scandal and gossip, to take no notice of it. If you do so, you may always be worried and irritated. (4) You would get a book of concertina music from any music-seller by ordering it.

RECIPROCITY.—The saying "A green winter makes a fat churchyard" is an old one, based on the observation that, if the winter be mild, people are careless and forget that there is more danger to health in the changeableness of the season than in an average low temperature. A sharp cold winter is often bracing, and even the weakly bear up well in face of it; but the trial is severe when with fairly warm days we have cold nights, or when two or three climates seem to be mingled together in the weather of a single place, which often happens in what is called "a mild winter." The sudden changes do the harm. None but the most robust constitutions can bear these changes.

A. ANXIOUS.—The trouble is physical. You had better consult a medical man. It is useless worrying yourself about religious questions. Your brain is not in a condition to be exercised on such topics, and it is wrong to harass it with thoughts of the nature indicated. Look to your health—think of the present, and leave the future alone. This is how people make their lives miserable by mistaking the body for the soul. One half the "anxiety" professed, and doubtless actually experienced, by persons "about their souls" is really worry of brain-induced disease. Some maladies cause fear and misery, others sweet peace and assurance. Consumption, for example, in its early stages produces anxiety, but later on in the affliction a calm which is taken for happiness.

RELENT.—A cheerful spirit is one of the most valuable gifts ever bestowed upon humanity by a kind Creator. It is the sweetest and most fragrant flower of the Spirit—that constantly sends out its beauty and fragrance, and blesses everything within its reach. It will sustain the soul in the darkest and most dreary places of this world. It will hold in check the demons of despair, and stifle the power of discouragement and hopelessness. It is the brightest star that ever cast its radiance over the darkened soul, and one that seldom sets in the gloom of morbid fancies and foreboding imaginations. Cultivate, then, a cheerful spirit, and cherish it as something sacred. Obey the command, "Rejoice evermore," and its light and blessedness will ever fall upon your pathway.